

WORLD / A28

Egypt suffers
first death from
bird flu virus

Militant leaders rage
at medal for Palparan



By Luige A. del Puerto
MILITANTS WERE IN AN UP-
roar yesterday on learning
that a controversial general
they claimed was a top hu-
man rights violator would be
decorated for meritorious
service at today's Army Day

PALPARAN

MILITANT / A6

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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Monday, March 20, 2006

★★ 6 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 102 P18

website: www.inq7.net

Is entertaining the public
illegal? Joker asks cops

By TJ Burgoño
and Luige A. del Puerto

SINCE WHEN DID
strolling in a black T-shirt
by Manila Bay become a
crime?

Senators Joker Arroyo
and Rodolfo Blazon can't

IS ENTERTAINING / A22

BAKA MALLING,
BAWAL NA DIN!



RP most
endangered
democracy
in Asia

By Amando Doronila

AT NO TIME SINCE THE WATER-
shed military intervention in
Philippine politics in 1986 has the
Armed Forces emerged as a pivotal
power broker in the country than
during the weeks after President
Macapagal-Arroyo's proclama-
tion of a state of national emergen-
cy on Feb. 24.

Ms Arroyo lifted the state of
emergency on March 3, but
claims that residual threats
from those seeking to oust her
remain.

From this perspective, it can
be said that the Philippines has
gone through the crisis of Feb.
24 as the most endangered
democracy in Asia among the
developing countries that com-
posed the "third wave" of new
and restored democracies, in-
cluding Thailand and Indonesia,
in the wake of the collapse of
authoritarian regimes in
Latin America and Southeast
Asia in the 1980s.

Thus, Feb. 24 marked a turning
point in the democratization
wave that might cause
Prof. Samuel P. Huntington to
revise his widely accepted treatise
on the "third wave" of democ-
ratization, using the Philip-
pine deviant experience as a
case study of democratization
in reverse.

The Philippines' first serious
attempt at curtailing democracy
since Ferdinand Marcos de-
clared martial law 34 years ago
stands in sharp contrast to the
redemocratization when Fil-
ipinos toppled the Marcos dicta-
torship with people power 20
years ago.

The events of the past few
weeks have proved that the country
has again become the fulcrum—the pilot model—of
democratic backsliding.

Indeed, the growing role of
the military in the enforcement of
security measures to strengthen state authority and
to prop up a politically belea-
guered administration has
raised the specter of a crypto-
military dictatorship.

People who have been watch-
ing news of the tumultuous
RP MOST / AZZ

DOJ may drop raps vs 3 of 4 GIs in rape

Prosecutor bucks motion questioning VFA legality



DEMONSTRATORS carry empty coffins draped in the US flag during an antiwar march and rally in Hollywood, California.

JUSTICE SECRETARY Raul Gonzalez indicated yesterday that charges may be dropped against three of the four US Marines accused of raping a Filipino woman in November last year as cracks began to show in the legal team handling her case.

"I think not all of them should be charged, but Smith should be charged," Gonzalez said, referring to the principal accused, Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith, according to Agence France-Presse (AFP).

Smith faces charges of raping a 22-year-old Filipino woman at the Subic Bay Freeport following a US-Philippine counterterrorism exercise, AFP said.

Accused of conspiring with Smith were Marine SSgt. Chad Carpenter and Lance Corporals Keith Silkwood and Dominic Duplicans.

Gonzalez said his department would decide on Smith's appeal to have the rape charge dropped before the arraignment of the accused on March 24 at the Olongapo City court where they would face their accuser and enter a plea.

The court does not have to heed the DOJ's resolution, but it will have strong influence in deciding who will be charged.

The Marines have insisted only one of them had sex with the DOJ/AB

Protests mark 3rd year of Iraq invasion

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA—ANTIWAR protesters took to the streets around the world, including the Philippines, to demand that American soldiers leave Iraq, on the second day of global protests marking the third anniversary of the US-led invasion.

The demonstrations started Saturday with 500 people chanting antiwar slogans in Sydney and rolled around the world, with major protests in London and the United States, where more than 1,000 people gathered in New York's Times Square.

However, attendance at the demonstrations was lower than organizers had predicted, and far short of the millions worldwide who protested the initial invasion in March 2003.

In Manila, a left-wing coalition called the Iraq Solidarity Cam-

paign condemned the US military presence in Iraq—and in southern Philippines. About 500 peace activists belonging to the group said they planned a protest march on Monday to the heavily guarded US Embassy, where they planned to pelt President George W. Bush's picture with rotten vegetables.

Filipino antiwar activists grieve for the growing lists of dead soldiers and civilians, mostly women

and children, as the immoral and unholy war against so-called terrorism rages on, led by US President George "war freak" Bush," the group said in a statement.

The Philippines banned the deployment of workers to Iraq after insurgents abducted Filipino truck driver Angelo de la Cruz in July 2004. In a bid to save his life, Manila conceded to the kidnappers.

PROTESTS / A23

A witness account of the agony in Milosevic's war

By Fernando del Mundo

(The writer is a former UN staff member who had gone on assignments in the former Yugoslavia, which had broken up into five countries—Serbia-Montenegro, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia and Slovenia. He joined the INQUIRER 10 months ago.—Ed.)

SLOBODAN MILOSEVIC PROBABLY never knew that a Filipino was behind some of the more damaging reports of atrocities that prompted Nato to launch an air war on Serbia in the spring of 1999.

The Nato bombing lasted 78 days and led to the downfall of Milosevic, who died last week and was buried Saturday in his hometown of Pozarevac, in Serbia-Montenegro, all that's left of what was previously known as Yugoslavia. (See story at right.)

As a press officer in the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, I was essentially the eyes and ears of the UNHCR on the ground, traveling

to remote villages to find out where aid was needed, reporting on what I had witnessed and bringing foreign correspondents to areas where they had no access.

On the eve of the Nato bombing, CNN ran a story on the Serbian offensive in the town of Srbica in the Serbian province of Kosovo—arena of the third war to engulf the Balkans following the breakup of Yugoslavia. Wars had previously raged in Croatia and Bosnia.

The CNN footage showed houses burning. There was an interview with two ethnic Albanian women, narrating in tears how Serbian police and paramilitary troops had raided Srbica and taken away their husbands.

The entire TV film clip came from the UNHCR: Using a digital camera, I had shot the scenes and conducted the interviews with the help of a driver-interpreter.

When Milosevic saw the CNN story, he fired off a protest to the UNHCR, accusing the office of

A WITNESS / A12



MILOSEVIC'S longtime secretary Mirjana Dragolovic mourns on the marker by the grave of the former Serbian leader in Pozarevac town in Serbia-Montenegro.

Serbian leader buried where he, wife first kissed

POZAREVAC, SERBIA-MONTENEGRO—SLOBODAN MILOSEVIC was laid to rest on Saturday beneath a tree in the backyard of the family estate in his hometown—an anticlimactic end to one of the bloodiest chapters in the history of the turbulent Balkans.

The burial of the late Serbian leader a week after his death while on UN trial for genocide and crimes against humanity followed a tense farewell ceremony in Belgrade that drew at least 80,000 nationalist supporters, and another at his birthplace attended by up to 20,000 admirers.

As a cold drizzle fell, his flag-draped coffin was lowered into a double grave with a place for his widow, Mirjana Markovic, who reportedly wants to join him when she dies.

The grave, marked with a simple marble slab inscribed with both the couple's names in Cyrillic letters and the dates 1941-2006, was dug beneath a favorite linden tree where Milosevic and Markovic first kissed as high school sweethearts.

No immediate members of Milosevic's family attended. But in a letter read out at graveside, Markovic, who lives in self-imposed exile in Moscow because she faces Serbian charges of abuse of power during her husband's 13-year reign, said: "You have come back to our home to

SERBIAN / A13

Queer eye for straight Congress

By Blanche S. Rivera

THEY'RE HERE, THEY'RE QUEER, and they're all set to become a political force.

Running on a platform of anti-discrimination and equal employment opportunity, the Philippines' lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender (LGBT) people are ready to break into the political scene with their entry in the party-list elections next year.

Ang Ladlad, a network of 150 LGBT individuals and counting, plans to file its candidacy for party-list representation in the Commission on Elections in September.

"This is a test case for us. We want to see if Congress, if the Philippines is ready for us," Ang Ladlad's founding chair and top candidate Danton Remoto told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

Ang Ladlad includes some members from LEAP (Lesbian Advocates Philippines), Rainbow Rights, Baguio-based Lumina, and members of lesbian and gay groups in the University of the Philippines, Polytechnic University of the Philippines and the University of the East.

QUEER / A22

FORECAST: Eastern Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY KATE PETROSO, PGI RESEARCH/03/19/06

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Angono	Partly Cloudy
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Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy
Catigbian	Partly Cloudy
Iligan	Partly Cloudy
Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Ban. Surigao	Partly Cloudy
Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Gagaon de Oro	Cloudy with Rain
Boracay	Cloudy with Rain

Opposition set to defy Senga

Chiz: Dialogue with troops to push through despite 5-pt directive

By Michael Lim Ubac and Christine O. Avendaño

IN A MOVE THAT COULD PUT TO THE TEST THE five-point guidance issued by Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga, the House minority is bent on pushing through with "wider dialogues" with soldiers.

House Minority Leader Francis "Chiz" Escudero yesterday said the aim of the dialogues with the military "in and out of the camp" was "to listen to what they have to say."

He said the dialogues would also allow the opposition in the Lower House to answer charges that had been leveled against them by the administration.

According to Escudero, "soldiers, officers and enlisted men" should also learn that "being [in] the opposition does not make one an enemy of the state."

The talks would also disprove claims by the administration that the opposition had been plotting against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The plan was disclosed by Escudero during deliberations Thursday on the proposed budget of the Department of National Defense.

The Sorsogon lawmaker insisted that the House minority had a right to talk to the soldiers since the President herself planned to do so.

He castigated Col. Tristan Kison, the erstwhile AFP spokesperson, for putting his

process by which promotions and appointments were made within the AFP but leaving too much room for discretion on the part of the appointing authority (President Arroyo).

Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz had insisted they were "doing their best to insulate promotion from political interference, and are using performance as a basis for promotion."

Reacting to Senga's five-point guidance, maverick administration Sen. Joker Arroyo yesterday said the military should talk less, cut back on its propaganda and withdraw from the glare of the media.

"They better just keep quiet and return to barracks," he said in an interview.

Arroyo said the military's high-profile stance in the media wasn't helping dispel the belief that it was ready to flex its muscles and intervene in a political turmoil, much less quell the restiveness within its ranks.

"The AFP is very talkative. Every bit of everything is press release," he added.

For Sen. Panfilo Lacson, a former national police chief, the guidance would not help quell the restiveness within the military ranks.

"No amount of five-point guidance will remove the restiveness among military personnel, especially when the central figure in the 'Hello Garc' tape is now the prospective replacement of General Senga while the others were rewarded with the choicest posi-

tions," he said.

Malacañang, however, said the five-point guidance should serve as a "reminder" to politicians and those wanting to bring soldiers to their cause.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the five-point guidance "clearly delineates the role of the military as professional soldiers committed to the chain of com-

mand and the Constitution."

Yesterday, Presidential Political Adviser Gabriel Claudio accused Sen. Rodolfo Biazon of agitating the military against the President.

On Friday, Biazon called on soldiers to defend the Constitution, saying "anyone who violates the Constitution is your enemy."

In a text message, Claudio said

that Biazon "practically accuses the President of violating the Constitution."

"If he is quoted correctly, Senator Biazon seems bent on inflaming the political situation and agitating the military against the President and other government authorities," Claudio said. With reports from TJ Burgonio and Luige del Puerto



CZECH VISITOR

Senate President Franklin Drilon (right) welcomes Czech Republic Senator Premysl Sobotka (left) at Villamor Air Base yesterday. The second highest official in his government, Sobotka and five other Czech senators are here on a four-day visit. They are scheduled to meet with Vice President Noli de Castro, Speaker Jose de Venecia, Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo and the other Filipino senators.

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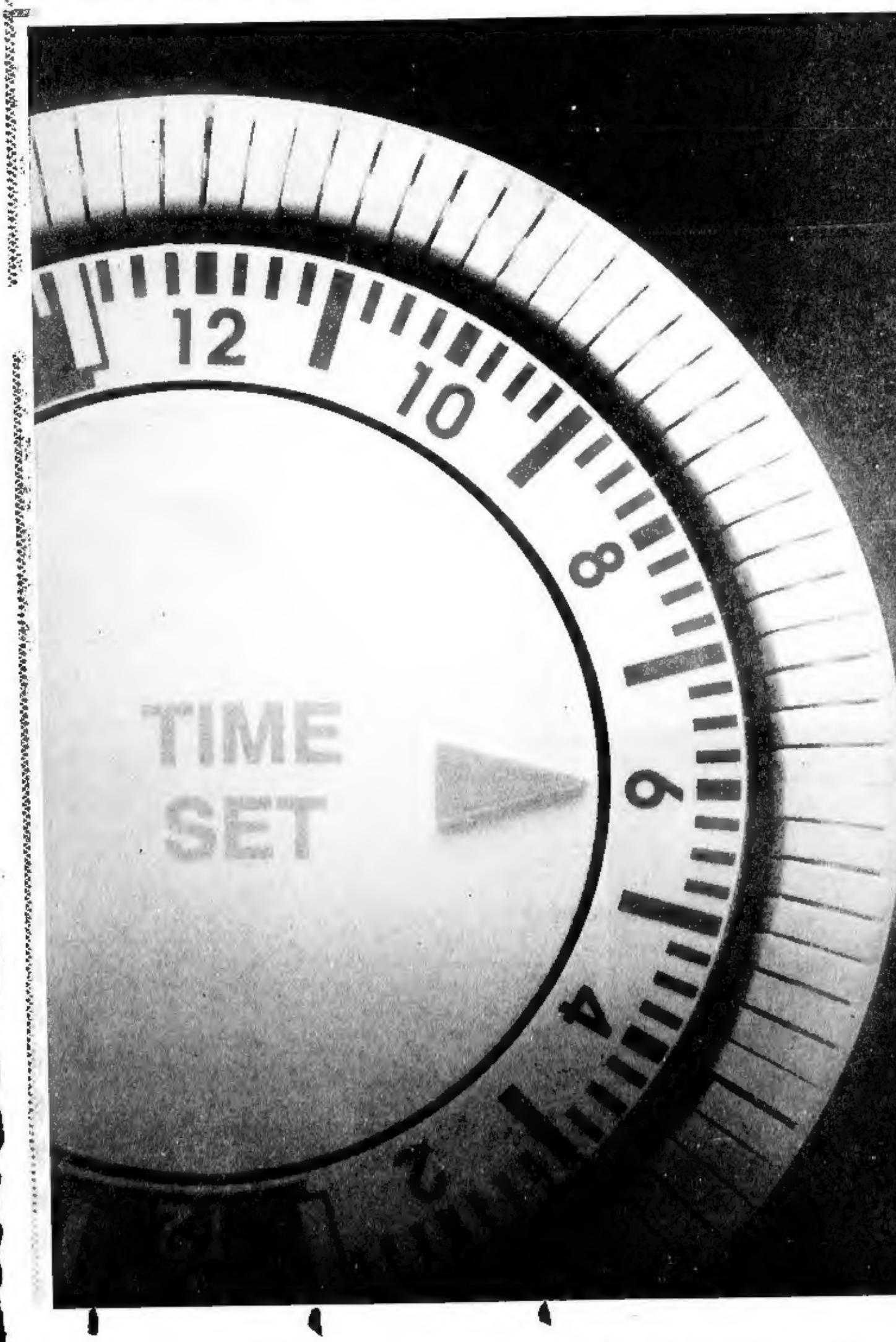
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Corruption costing RP – CSC exec

By Nelson F. Flores

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONER KARINA Constantino-David has warned that the government's failure to curb corruption would heavily cost the nation's social fabric.

David, a sociologist, issued the warning Friday during the Anti-Corruption Convergence Summit at the Crowne Plaza Galleria Manila. Among the serious costs of failure, she said, would be society's indifference and apathy towards the government. She said these would ultimately lead to cynicism and the destruction of the democratic way of life.

According to David, the people now are slowly becoming indifferent due to the empty promises made about fighting corruption.

She said that for the anticorruption drive to be successful there should be a self-cleansing program in all the government agencies. "Maginis mun sa sariling bakuran (Let's first clean our own backyards)," David stressed.

During the summit, Ombudsman Mercedes Gutierrez launched the National Anti-Corruption Program of Action (Nacpa), a comprehensive program of action against corruption in government.

"This is just the start of a unified approach in addressing corruption. With the Nacpa, the anticorruption campaign would be coordinated and well-planned," Gutierrez said.

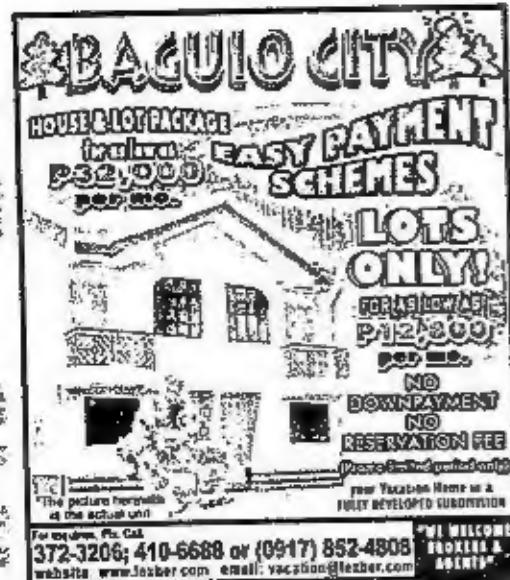
Gutierrez said that through Nacpa, the Office of the Ombudsman would strengthen the coordination of anticorruption programs between the government and civil society groups.

Among Nacpa's programs would be the training of at least 8,000 anticorruption investigators and prosecutors and the sponsorship of anticorruption laws.

Guillermo "Bill" Luz, executive director of the Makati Business Club and chair of the Coalition Against Corruption, challenged the Ombudsman to go after corrupt government officials and exercise its independence as an institution.

"We realize that the Office of the Ombudsman is an independent institution.

We look forward that its promises be kept," Luz said.



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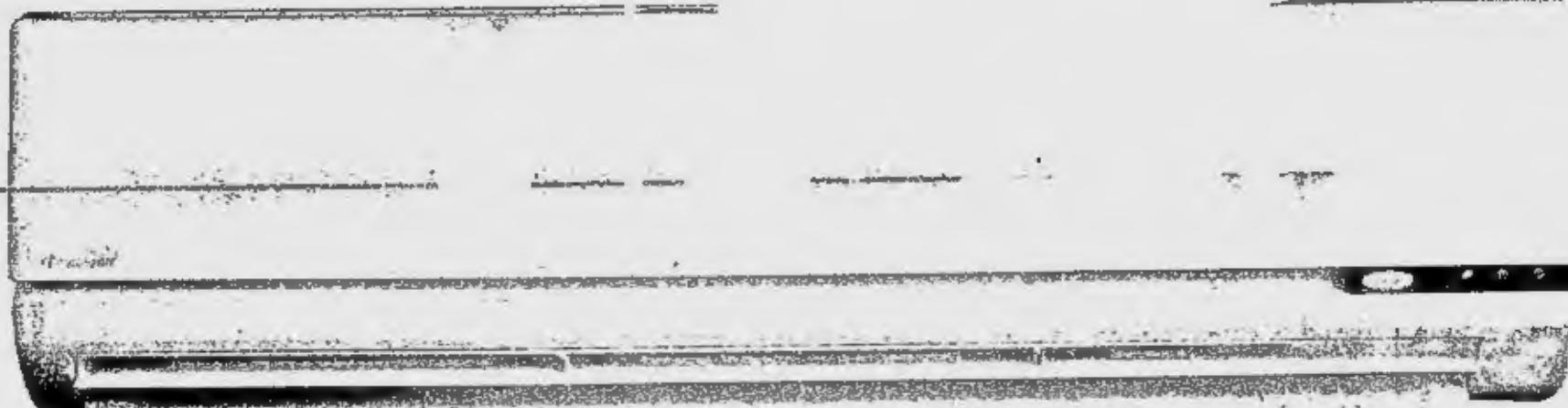
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Cops admit case vs SAF rebels weak

By Luigi A. del Puerto

THE POLICE HAVE ADMITTED THAT THE case against Special Action Force officers implicated in the attempt to unseat President Macapagal-Arroyo was "a little weak."

"In truth, it's a little weak, but we are not prohibited from submitting (additional) evidence during the trial," Director Marcelo Ele Jr., chief of the police Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management, said.

The DIDM, however, has "found probable cause" to recommend administrative summary hearings against Senior Supt. Benjamin Magalang, Chief Insp. Eric Dilag and Insp. Ryan Paloma.

The three officers face charges of grave misconduct. If found guilty, they could be dismissed from the service.

Their former superior, sacked SAF commander Chief Supt. Marcelino Franco, also faces charges of negligence, according to Ele.

"We have found probable cause based on the preponderance of reports (of their involvement)," Ele said on the phone. "But we have no sworn statements (against them). The case is a little weak."

Should they fail to get additional evidence, the police will be pursuing its case against the four SAF officers based on reports tagging them as having had a hand in trying to oust Ms Arroyo.

Police Director General Arturo Lomibao would be assigning a hearing officer to the case, Ele added.

Lomibao earlier said that part of the plan to unseat Ms Arroyo was for the SAF to take over Camp Crame and the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

The SAF men, the most seasoned combatants in the police force, were supposed to take Lomibao and his two top deputies hostage, and force a declaration of a withdrawal of support by the PNP from the Arroyo administration.

The SAF had planned the attack on PNP headquarters and the Naia twice in January—the 14th and then again on the 18th and 19th, Lomibao said.

The attacks were aborted, on at least one occasion, after Lomibao himself confronted one of the SAF commanders.

There were supposed to be similar moves by two other elite military units—the Philippine Marines and the Army's Scout Rangers, according to Lomibao.

When the plans were aborted, the SAF, Marines and Scout Rangers shifted their focus to joining the protest actions of Feb. 24, the 20th anniversary of the People Power revolution, Lomibao said.

Prelates making it hard for GMA to charm them

By Christian V. Esguerra

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO HAS TO work harder on her "charm offensive" directed at the Catholic Church if she is to overcome the apparent resistance put up by some prelates and priests to being disarmed by Malacañang.

While the President was touching base with several bishops in their dioceses during a recent seven-day sortie, she was unaware that a mobile phone text message was circulating among priests, warning that the visits harbored a "real motive."

Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), was the main recipient of the message composed by a priest.

"She is a clever strategist. It is easy to fall into her trap. She will even dangle money. I hope you can alert your colleagues," said the message, a copy of which was forwarded to the INQUIRER.

Another clergyman composed his own warning, which said: "We must remain steadfast and not allow ourselves to be used, especially if the initiative comes from GMA."

The Catholic Church, whose influence in politics is so great it has been a major factor in the downfall of presidents and the rise of new ones, has been opposing a mining law allowing foreigners to exploit the country's mineral resources. Malacañang has hoisted its enactment as an achievement in efforts at economic recovery.

In addition, the Arroyo administration has been buffeted by accusations of electoral fraud, a coup attempt led by military officers in February and, in its aftermath, a crackdown perceived to be accompanied by the trampling of civil liberties.

It therefore came as no surprise that Ms Arroyo took the time last week to visit, one after the other, Archbishop Paciano Aniceto of San Fernando, Pampanga, and Bishops Ramon Villena of Nueva Vizcaya and Arturo Bastes of Sorsogon.

"It was a good gesture on the part of the President to greet the bishops," Bishop Leonardo Medroso of Borongan, Samar, told the INQUIRER.

"But why wasn't she doing this before? There must be a motivation. For me, she wanted to court the bishops, to soften their stand on mining and the political issue."

Like Medroso, Bastes and Villena are strongly opposed to mining operations whose ill-effects were condemned by the CBCP in a pastoral letter distributed on Jan. 29.

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Militant leaders rage at medal for Palparan

From page A1
celebration.

"This will only embolden and encourage more human rights violations by other officers of the Armed Forces,"

Bayan secretary general Renato Reyes Jr. said of the Distinguished Service Star honors to be conferred on Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan during the 109th Philippine Army anniversary celebra-

tion in Port Bonifacio.

Kilusang Magbukid ng Pilipinas information officer Carl Ala said honoring Palparan meant he had received a fresh signal from his superiors to be

"more brazen" in going after leftist activists.

The medal Palparan will get is given to senior officers who had done well as commanders of battalion-sized or bigger units. Unlike such decorations as the Medal of Valor and the gold Cross, it is not a combat medal.

Palparan is being honored "for eminently meritorious and valuable service rendered as Commander of the 8th Infantry Division," a unit based in Samar, where local politicians and human rights militants protested his assignment last year.

The controversial general now commands the 7th Infantry Division in Luzon.

Reward, not punishment

"This goes to show that under the Arroyo administration, people like Palparan are rewarded and not punished for their involvement in human rights violations," Reyes said.

He said it appeared the administration had "exonerated Palparan" of alleged human rights violations and disregarded the numerous complaints against him.

"It's a slap on the face of the people. This is so ironic," said Ala.

The military dismissed the criticism as mere propaganda.

"Do they have basis for these accusations?" Army spokesperson Maj. Bartolome Bacarro said. "Like what General Palparan said, if they have complaints they should [bring them to] the right forum, not in the streets."

"He was given an award because he accomplished his mission, and he has accomplished it outstandingly," Bacarro added.

News that Palparan would receive the honor coincided with the release by a militant group of a new tally alleging that 18 political activists were killed in a "reign of terror" in Central Luzon from January to March 17 this year.

Ten other activists were reported missing during the period, said Joseph Carlas, chair of the Alyansa ng Magbukid sa Gitnang Luzon (AMGL).

The AMGL counted 10 killings in Bulacan, three each in Tarlac and Nueva Ecija, and one each in Pampanga and Bataan.

Palparan yesterday said it was "baseless" to blame him or the military for the slayings and disappearances. He said leftist groups and the New People's Army had made their own enemies.

He said it was wrong to call Bulacan the "killing fields" since the number of soldiers, policemen and village chiefs slain by the NPA in the province outnumbered the civilian victims.

Human rights groups had also filed charges against Palparan for alleged rights violations while he was brigade commander in Mindoro.

He was also blamed by other groups and Western Samar Representatives, Catalino Figueiroa and Reynaldo Uy for 199 human rights violations when he was assigned to

IN THE KNOW

Cases vs Palparan

REPORTED CASES OF HUMAN RIGHTS violations in the Visayas during Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan's term as commander of the 8th Infantry Division (February to Sept. 1, 2005):

- March 14—Bayan Muna regional coordinator Felidito Decut is shot dead in Tacloban City.

- April 8—Five improvised bombs are lobbed at the Bayan Muna office in Catarman, Northern Samar, injuring one person.

- April 9—Motorcycle-riding men in Borongan shoot and wound Aldin Ambida, Bayan Muna Eastern Samar coordinator.

- April 15—Bayan Muna coordinator Alfredo Davis is gunned down by two men in Mahaplag, Leyte. His wife Imelda, of Abane Pinay, is wounded.

- April 19—Members of the 63rd Infantry Battalion allegedly use helicopters to bomb Barangay Guibatangan and the adjacent village of Palmera in Northern Samar, forcing around 500 families to leave their homes.

- May 3—Bayan Muna organizer Diosdado Abunda is shot and wounded by unidentified men.

- May 8—Lao Bagares, vice chair of Bayan Muna in Eastern Visayas, is shot and wounded by motorcycle-riding men in Guiuan, Eastern Samar.

- May 12—Protestant Pastor Edison Lapuz, Katungod-Sinirangan Bisaya chair, and Alfredo Malinao, head of the Kahungungan sa mga Mag-uruma sa San Isidro, are shot dead in San Isidro, Leyte.

- Also in May—Around 900 residents of eight upland villages in Calbiga, Samar, flee their homes following "special operations" by soldiers. Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo says 11 activists have been killed and four attempted murders and 98 cases of human rights violations have been reported since Palparan assumed command of the 8th Division.

- Sept. 1—Bayan Eastern Visayas chair Norman Bocar is gunned down in Borongan, on the same day Palparan took over as chief of the 7th Infantry Division in Central Luzon.

Cyril L. Bonabene, PDI Research

that province.

During House committee hearings last year, Palparan said accusations that he had approved killings and other human rights violations were unfounded and "highly malicious."

"How can I think of killing a person ... whom I was not fully knowledgeable of?" he said.

Besides Palparan, the Distinguished Service Star medal will go to Col. Eduardo del Rosario as commander of the 73rd Infantry Battalion between June 2006 and July 2003.

First Lt. Roden Orbon will get the Gold Cross for gallantry in action as platoon leader of a team that encountered some 200 Moro rebels in Pikit, Cotabato, in 2003.

MSgt. Rosa Maria Lanila will receive the Outstanding Achievement Medal, Cadet Col. Ronino Bungcaras a Bronze Cross, and Maj. Francisco Ladrido the Gawad sa Kaunlaran award. With a report from Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Correction

IN THE MARCH 19 ISSUE, the front-page banner story—"Senga sets 5-pt guidance"—misquoted Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga as saying that the AFP's constitutional mandate was "not a license to wrest leadership of the government from public officials on the basis of perceived intervention of governance." What Senga actually said was "perceived imperfection"—not intervention—"of governance."

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascarosa Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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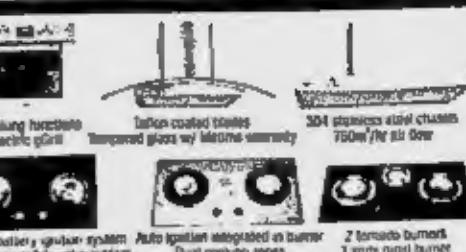
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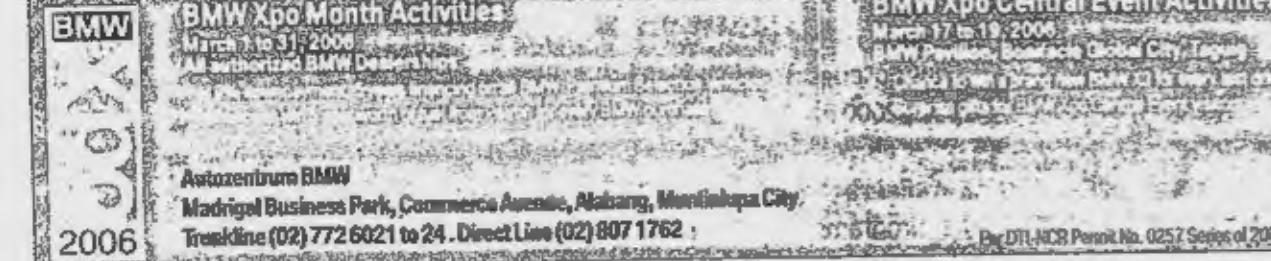
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318i Exec	2002	Titanium Silver	39,423	1,350,000
318i Exec	2005	Sienna Red	14,756	1,879,000
320i (E90)	2005	Monaco Blue	7,388	2,250,000
320i Exec (E90)	2005	Antir	2,197	2,450,000
323i	1998	Black Sapphire	42,900	1,358,000
325i Exec	2003	Titanium Silver	50,115	1,739,000
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Dr. Antonio L. Tamayo serves as the University's First President and Chairman of the Board, while Dr. Daisy M. Tamayo serves as its Second President. Both hold Masteral and Doctorate degrees from top institutions here and abroad - Antonio from the prestigious George Washington University in Washington, D.C. and Daisy from New York University.

UPH-DALTA and UPH-JONELTA (founded by Antonio's parents, Drs. Jose and Nena Tamayo) together formed a consortium known today as the University of Perpetual Help System. All together, UPH-DALTA and UPH-JONELTA comprise a total of eight campuses with 40,000 students and four hospitals.

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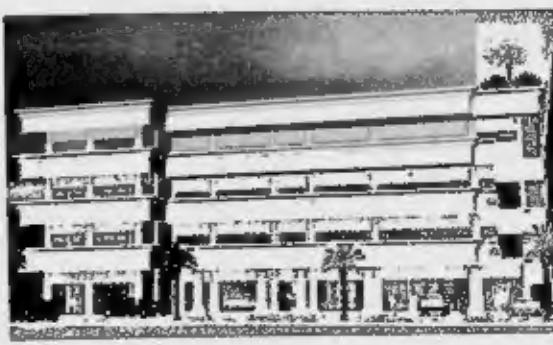
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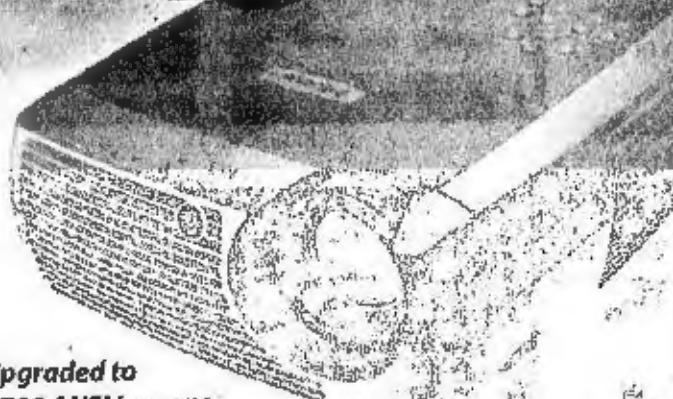
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DOJ may drop raps ...

From page A1

woman and that the act was consensual. Lawyers for Smith and Carpenter have confirmed their appearance at the arraignment, while a lawyer at Silkwood and Du-plantis said he is still studying whether to bring his clients to court.

The men are in the custody of the US Embassy. It has refused to hand them over to local authorities, citing a provision in the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) that allows US authorities to keep soldiers in their custody during legal proceedings.

In Olongapo, Prosecutor Prudencio Jalandoni called the inquirer to say he was not supporting the omnibus motion filed by the woman's private lawyers—Evalyn Ursua, Honora- to Aquino and Anna Liza Gonzales.

The motion, filed on Friday, asked Olongapo Judge Renato Dilag to declare Article 5, Paragraph 6, of the VFA unconstitutional. This states that the custody of the accused resides in the US military and outlines the one-year window to resolve judicial proceedings involving American military personnel.

The Philippine Senate approved the VFA in 1999.

The custody and jurisdiction issues have prompted Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago and several senators to seek the abrogation of the agreement.

Fear of delays

"I will not join [the motion] because it will just delay the proceedings," Jalandoni said.

He said the Supreme Court had upheld the constitutionality of the VFA "in its entirety."

He said his nonconfirmation of the private lawyers' motion would prompt the judge to deny the motion.

Jalandoni said he was following the instruction of Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuñi that "it was not right to defer the proceedings on the basis of a question on the constitutionality of the VFA."

"What we want is a speedy trial," he said.

Jalandoni said he wanted the March 24 arraignment set by Dilag to proceed as scheduled.

However, the private lawyers, in their motion, asked for a deferment of the arraignment until the questions of custody and jurisdiction were settled.

They also moved for the issuance of an "alias warrant of arrest" to substitute Dilag's Jan. 13 warrant.

Procedural issues

Zuñi returned the Jan. 13 warrant to Dilag after the US government on Jan. 16 formally acknowledged custody of the accused.

Dilag later recalled the warrant, saying that "by submitting themselves to the custody of the US Embassy, [the accused] are deemed to have surrendered to the proper authorities."

The woman's lawyers said the VFA provision that they questioned effectively amended the court's rules of criminal procedure on arrest, bail, arraignment and trial, among other things.

"Against this factual backdrop arises the legal question as to whether the VFA has effectively amended our rules of criminal procedure, thereby infringing on the Supreme Court's exclusive power to promulgate rules of practice and procedure in all courts as provided under the Philippine Constitution," part of the 22-page motion said.

The woman's lawyers said that "without acquiring physical jurisdiction over the accused, this court will have no jurisdiction to continue with the proceedings in this case."

They said a copy of the motion was furnished the Office of the Solicitor General because the matter involved legal questions.

The lawyers also said the US Embassy in Manila, where the four soldiers are being held, is "not an office of the Philippine government, nor is it under the authority of this court."

Even the premises of the US Embassy are "not part" of Philippine territory, they said.

The situation, they said, was "aggravated further" by the one-year period set by the VFA to resolve criminal cases.

Due process

The woman's lawyers said their client's right to due process had also been violated because the court was denied custody of the accused.

This has made her a "second-class citizen" in her own country as "privileged treatment" is given to the US military personnel, they said.

The motion has been set for hearing on March 22 or two days before the arraignment. Reports from AFP, Tonetta Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

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Students demand say in any tuition hikes

By Alcuin Papa

MILITANT STUDENTS HAVE ACCUSED THE Commission on Higher Education (CHED) of favoring private universities when it allowed them to raise their tuition this coming school year without consulting the students.

College Editors Guild of the Philippines president Jose Cosido said that based on their latest statistics, fewer than 10 of 82 private colleges and universities had applied for tuition increases higher than the prevailing inflation rate of 7.4 percent.

This means, Cosido said, that more than 70 schools will automatically raise their tuition even without prior consultation with their students.

Under CHED Memorandum No. 14, colleges and universities could automatically raise their tuition and other fees without consulting their students as long as the increase would not be higher than the prevailing inflation rate.

Cosido accused CHED of being an unwitting ally of school owners who take advantage of the loophole in the memorandum to avoid having to consult with their students.

National Union of Students in the Philippines (NUSP) president Marco de los Reyes said that instead of safeguarding the interest of the students, CHED Memorandum 14 is being used to justify tuition increases.

De los Reyes said the use of the inflation rate as the benchmark for the rate of tuition and other fee increases had allowed school owners to increase tuition and other fees at will.

He said the students are not able to contest the increases.

"NUSP stands firm that schools must still consult with their students regardless of the rate of increase of tuition and other

fees," De los Reyes said.

Raymond Palatino of the Kabataan party-list group urged CHED to "take an active role in ensuring that the rights of the students are respected, especially

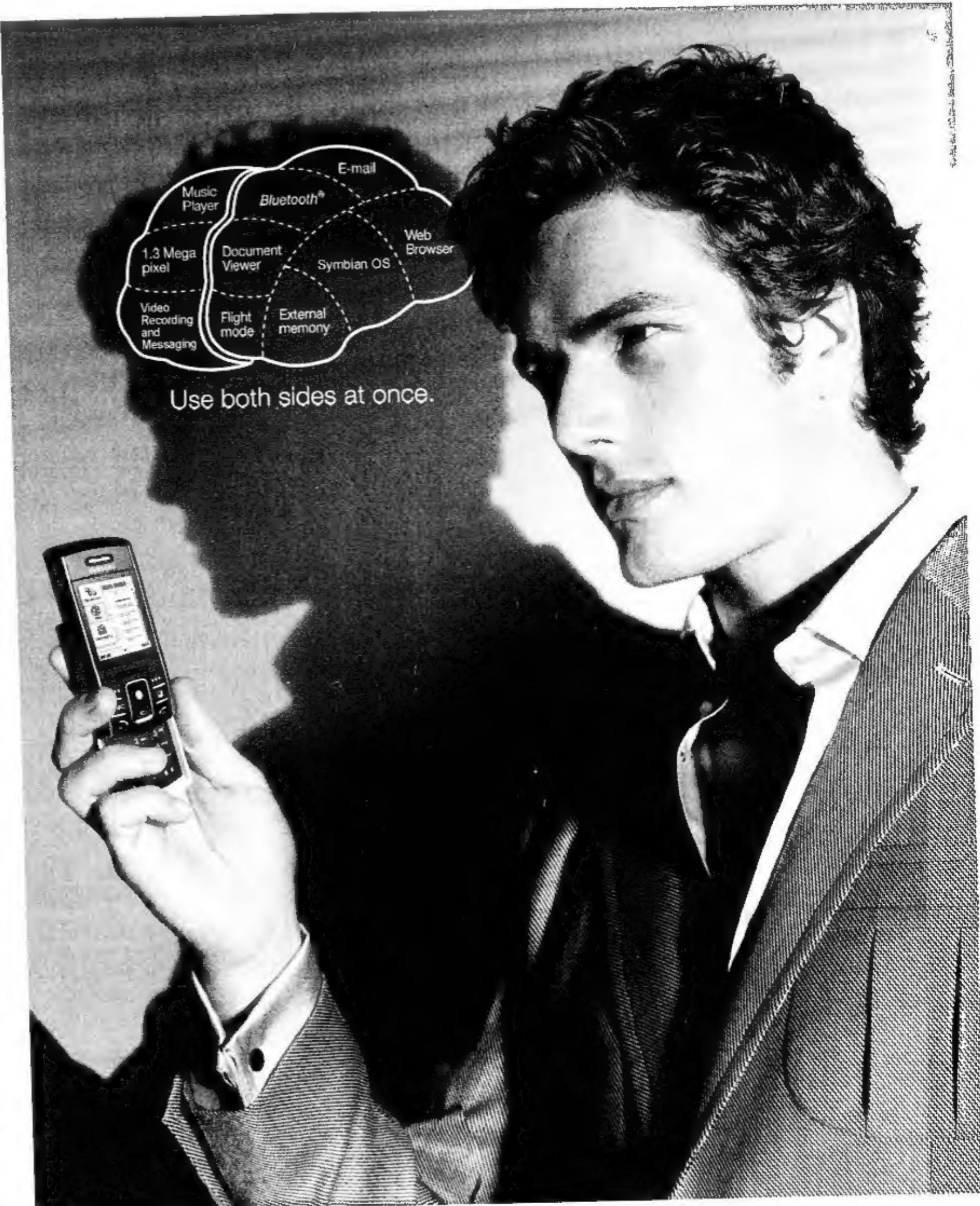
regarding student consultations."

"We demand that CHED Memorandum No. 14 be reviewed, now that its antistudent provisions are already being exposed and opposed by the students."

Militant students have set up Tuition Monitor (TM) where student councils and parents can text or call in their complaints to the TM Hotline 0915-892-2055.

The students hope the campaign will

allow them to keep a tight watch on schools, form a broad unity against unabated tuition and other increases, and demand a moratorium on further increases next school year.



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Serbian leader buried where he, wife first kissed

From page A1

rest in the place you loved the most."

"You lost your life while fighting for noble causes. You were killed by villains. But I know you will live forever for all who wish to live like human beings," her letter said.

A letter from the couple's son, Marko Milosevic, expressed hope that the late president's death would "sober up the humiliated Serb people."

"To die for one's country means to live forever," his letter said.

No priest officiated at the interment because Milosevic was an avowed atheist.

Among the supporters in Pozarevac were several indicted war crimes suspects on temporary leave from the UN tribunal in The Hague, Netherlands. One such suspect, retired Gen. Dragoljub Ojdanic, wore his military uniform.

After the burial, residents of the gritty industrial town 50 km south of the capital waited in a long line to view the grave, which was framed by a crimson carpet and brass stands holding red velvet ropes.

In Belgrade, die-hard supporters—many based in Milosevic's Socialist Party from Bosnia, Croatia and Kosovo, where he started wars that led to Yugoslavia's bloody 1990s breakup—packed a square in front of the federal parliament building in Belgrade.

Many wept uncontrollably and chanted "Slobodan! Slobodan!" at the sight of the flag-draped coffin on a bier atop a red-carpeted stage. Some clutched photographs of Milosevic or the UN court's two most-wanted fugitives: Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and his wartime military chief, Gen. Ratko Mladic.

Authorities refused to approve an official ceremony, but Saturday's farewell—organized by the Socialists and technically private—had some of the trappings of a state funeral.

Smaller funeral

But the crowd in Belgrade, though larger than many had expected, was far smaller than the 500,000 who turned out for the 2003 funeral of assassinated Serbian Premier Zoran Djindjic, who had sent Milosevic to the tribunal two years earlier.

Milosevic died March 11 in his room in a detention center near the tribunal, which was trying him on 66 counts of war crimes, including genocide. He was the first head of state to be extradited by his country for trial by the UN court.

Ultranationalist leaders and at least five retired ex-Yugoslav Army generals wearing parades uniforms stood by the stage.

"We are bidding farewell to the best one among us, fully conscious of his greatness," Socialist deputy president Milorad Vucevic said.

Bosko Nikolic, 42, holding a huge poster of Milosevic, said "I came to say goodbye to the greatest son of Serbia."

But some drivers passing by the square honked their horns and made obscene gestures at the Milosevic supporters, underscoring the disgust many Serbs feel toward the late autocratic president.

'Murder glorified'

"All of Belgrade's squares would be too small for all the victims of Milosevic and his rule," said Foreign Minister Vuk Draskovic, twice targeted for assassination by the

regime. "A murderer and his crimes were glorified today."

Among the speakers at the ceremony was Ramsey Clark, a former US attorney general and longtime Milosevic supporter who is now on Saddam Hussein's defense team. "History will prove that Slobodan Milosevic was right," Clark said, drawing cheers.

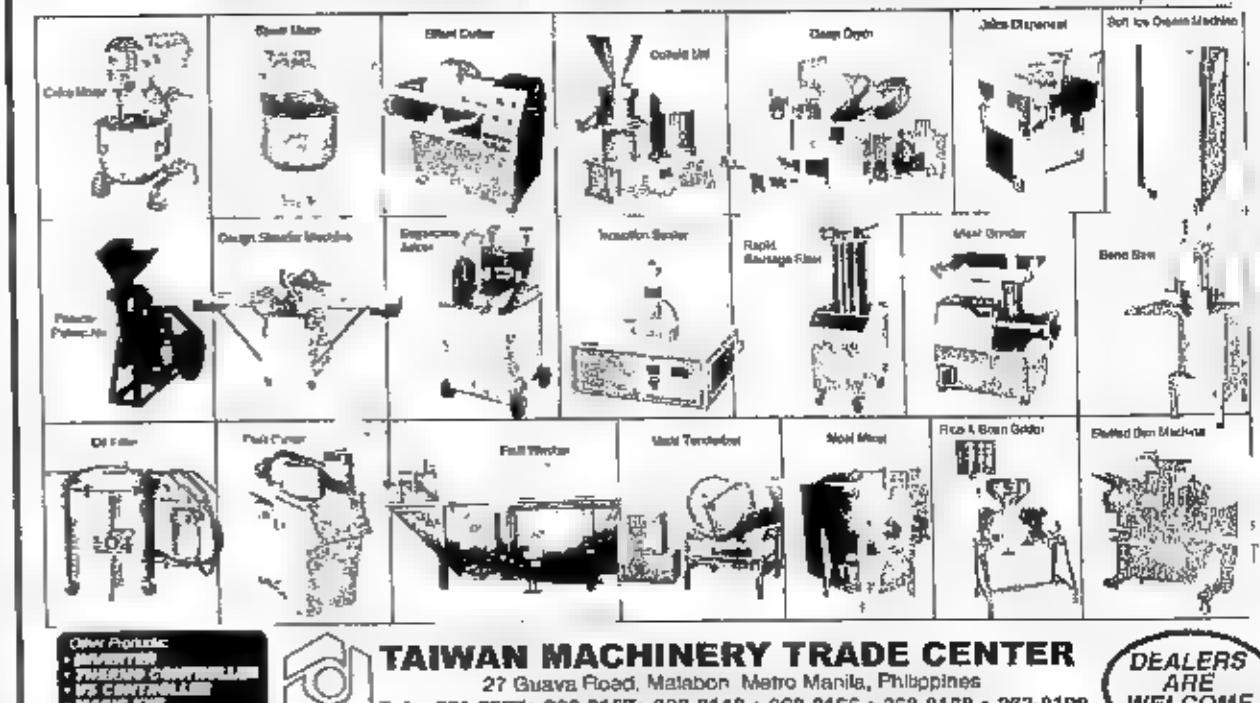
Later Saturday, about 2,000 anti-Milosevic activists gathered at another central Belgrade square for an impromptu rally.

The activists, mostly young people, waved red balloons, whistled, danced and shouted. "He is gone!" They also burned Milosevic's picture and scuffed briefly with a dozen Karadzic supporters who tried to disrupt the gathering.

Milosevic's Socialists and ultranationalists, ousted from power along with Milosevic in 2000, hoped to make political gains from their leader's death. **AP**

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Senga's blind side

THE ARMED FORCES CHIEF OF STAFF HAS ISSUED a memorandum to his service commanders, ordering them to remind the men and women in their commands to inoculate the military against the virus of politics. But in defining the soldier's role in the country's democratic project, Gen. Generoso Senga failed to consider the main source of political pressure in "these trying times": the incumbent administration.

EDITORIALS The directive is welcome, no question about it. "As mandated, we must remain apolitical," Senga writes. The five guidelines he offers, beginning with a reiteration of the constitutional principle of "supremacy of civilian authority over the military," are on point; they also have the advantage of being clearly stated. They end with a ringing formula, what we can call the Senga doctrine: "We are not to be regarded as a potent political force to be used by politicians in the furtherance of their vested interests."

Amen to that. But the middle guidelines, as they are phrased, reveal Senga's blind side. He defines political intervention as "a license to wrest leadership of the government" (second guideline) or "an unrestrained license to engage in partisan politics or publicly speak our minds against the government" (third). The phrasing makes it seem that political intervention is a one-way street, in the general direction of the presidential palace.

But it is also political intervention if the armed forces are used by the administration to protect the President's votes (and only hers). It is also political intervention if soldiers or officers speak their minds against the opposition (this is different, it bears emphasizing, from defending or explaining current policy, which is a necessity). It is political intervention if the AFP is used (whether against its will or with its full participation) to blame, cripple or defame the leadership of the opposition.

The President's continuing crisis of legitimacy is rooted precisely in the possible abuse of resources of the government—including those of the armed forces—first, in alleged election fraud and then in an alleged vast conspiracy to cover up. Senga's directive thus misses a sixth guideline: "We in the AFP are constitutionally mandated to be neutral; in these trying times, we cannot be seen as being neutral for the administration."

Biazon's folly

IN 1999, WHEN SEN. RODOLFO BIAZON WAS STILL on the side of the powers that be, some of his colleagues in the Senate joined a Supreme Court petition to declare the newly ratified Visiting Forces Agreement he had championed as unconstitutional.

If any of his colleagues (say Raul Roco or Teofisto Guingona Jr. or Sergio Osmeña III) had, at that time—with the intensity of conviction—called on the Armed Forces of the Philippines to "defend the Constitution" being violated (to name only a few of the respondents in the case) by President Joseph Estrada, Senate President Franklin Drilon, Senate foreign committee chair Blas Ople and Biazon himself, as Senate defense committee chair, the resulting tidal wave of laughter would have drowned them in public ridicule.

We cannot imagine any of the anti-VFA advocates then (many of whom believe until now that the agreement is unconstitutional, despite the Supreme Court's favorable decision) inviting the military to get involved in the issue simply because, as Biazon told INQUIRER editors last week, "anyone who violates the Constitution is your enemy." They would have been attacked, and rightly so, for imperiling the democratic project.

Seven years later, a desperate Biazon finds himself on the outs with the current administration; in his desperation, he has now issued a virtual invitation to the military to consider those whom he accuses of violating the Constitution as "your enemy." Why even wait for those tardy cowards in the Supreme Court to declare, say, Proclamation 1017 unconstitutional? That is only so much legal gobbledegook. From where he sits today, Biazon wants all soldiers to consider their commander in chief as the enemy, on his say-so.

We have repeatedly attacked President Macapagal-Arroyo's increasing use of Marcosian tactics, such as Proclamation No. 1017, Executive Order 464, and the so-called calibrated preemptive response policy. But we have always drawn the line at a military resolution to the political problem. We are sorry to see Biazon carelessly open the back door to military intervention.



GMA and friends also took a stroll at Baywalk

As I See It



Neal H. Cruz
wearing black T-shirts with the sign "Patsikin na. Now na" (Out now). But there was no mention of whom to oust. They were not carrying any placards or posters; neither were they chanting anything nor making any speeches.

But Secretary Gonzalez said, "They were clearly staging a rally with their distinctive shirts and thumbs-down signs." Former President Fidel V. Ramos has the habit of making any group he's with flash the thumbs-up sign while saying "Kaya natin ito." (He doesn't say kung sino ang kuya niya.) Will he now be arrested for doing this? I would like to see that. Or is the illegality limited to thumbs-down signs but not to thumbs-up signs?

And doesn't the police know that black is now a fashionable color for shirts? In fact, some elite military and police units have black uniforms. And there are unnumberable T-shirts with the same markings.

Anybody who goes to New York comes back with a T-shirt that says "I Love NY." Or go to any mall or flea market and you can buy shirts with unprints of the Beatles or of one of the more popular entertainers. Are all these shirts now outlawed?

Police said Dinky and her friends had gathered at coffee shops and restaurants, then donned the black T-shirts and were on their way to take a stroll at the Baywalk. If she was alone or with only a few friends, they said, she would not have been arrested. But she had about 50 friends with her, they added.

So now it is prohibited to take a stroll with many friends at the Baywalk? I remember that President Arroyo herself, not so long ago, took a stroll at the same Baywalk with her family, yayas and alalays, sipsips and media people.

ple—not to mention the security personnel—for photoops. That was quite a crowd. If she did the same thing again, would she be arrested? What was the difference between GMA's stroll at the Baywalk and Dinky's?

The similarly marked T-shirts Dinky's group wore? But isn't it common practice to distribute T-shirts with the same marks at gatherings in Luneta (Alay-Lakad, for instance) and then have those wearing the shirts walk along Roxas Boulevard? The practice was all right for others but not for the members of Dinky's group? Why?

Aha, because Dinky's T-shirts say "Patsikin na."

Although there was no name on the T-shirts, it could be said that "Patsikin na" might have been referring to GMA. But the phrase could as well be referring to corrupt officials, smugglers, rebel soldiers, drug traffickers in government—all of whom the President has declared war on. Isn't that an expression of support for her?

If only this administration were as tough with corrupt people, smugglers, drug traffickers and traffic violators as it is with Dinky's promenaders, we would be free of these scourges already.

But why is the Arroyo administration paying special attention to Dinky? Somebody said it could be because she is of the same height as GMA. (Does that mean that Sen. Juan Flavio should watch out?) Another said, it could be because somebody powerful cannot stand Dinky's hair accessories. That's a more likely explanation.

Just one more question: If the Baywalk promenaders, wearing the same black T-shirts with the same markings were led by Mike Defensor or Ignacio Bunye, or were composed of members of the LP-Atienza Wing, would the police have arrested them?

TODAY'S JOKE:

GMA: That Pulse Asia survey saying that 65 percent of Filipinos want me to resign can't be true. Look at all those people waving at me.

DEFENSOR. But Ma'am, don't you see they are all waving with their middle fingers?

Dreams

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



our target audience to stay away at the last minute. They did not. Some people, especially the TV reporters, asked me why there were politicians there. I answered: Because I invited them. I did say in my column everyone was welcome whatever their creed, color, or (preferred) gender. Everybody at least that professed to hate dictatorship and love freedom. The invitation extended even to Mike Defensor, though I could not have guaranteed his safety. Someone there told me he remembered Defensor when he was still a student activist exhorting fellow students to rise up against the Marcos dictatorship.

But the throng that gathered there warmed the heart and misted the eyes. Which brings me to the second question: How did we pull it off?

I have no idea. It was just pure magic.

Someone would tell me later it happened because everybody wanted it to happen. Another one would tell me later it happened because it was an idea waiting to happen. Still somebody would tell me later, "Pare, I think you touched a chord with that line, 'I believe in the power of music, I do not believe in the music of power.' Good to know that even if I'm not a musician, I touch chords."

It began a couple of weeks before the event. I broached the idea to my friend Pancho Lara, who also helped put up our concert for press freedom in 1999 at the Bahay ng Alumni. His friend Oya Arriola suggested June Rodriguez, a veteran organizer who never stopped serving the people.

We got in touch with Joel Saracho, the "emcee ng bayan," and held a meeting a couple of days later. From there it took a life of its own.

Everything just conspired to make it possible. If ever there was a conspiracy, divine and hu-

man, it was that. I cannot, however, give Raul Gonzalez the exact address of God if he should choose to issue an arrest warrant for Him, I am not in the possession of any such information.

It was enough to make you believe in Providence. People gave freely, and every time we thought we'd fall short of what we needed, something would suddenly turn up. Someone from out of the blue asked us during the concert how much more we needed and plunked down the cash before our flabbergasted eyes. She did not want to be mentioned, she was just an ordinary citizen, she said.

The stage was magnificent, I have to thank the events organizers we hired for it; they did an exceedingly professional job. The sound system was even more magnificent, donated by people who too would like their generosity to be noted only by heaven. Miraculously, I did not get visited by my perpetual scourge, gout, though I had been drinking nearly every night for the last two weeks while meeting with the musicians and volunteers. (That's a very good excuse!) Many more bands wanted to play, except that some of them had out-of-town gigs that day and we cut off the number of participants at a little past 30. As it was, we had an absolute surfeit of talent. I had worried about the weather some days before because it was always raining in late afternoon, but, lo and behold, God even donated a full moon that night.

I've not seen an event like this where I felt no bad vibes altogether. There was no note, or whisper, or shadow, of discord that night. Everybody was happy. The musicians were happy, the organizers were happy, the contributors were happy, the crowd was happy, even God was happy—or so He had it writ in people's faces. Only the person who claims God put her in Malacafang for a purpose was unhappy.

It was enough to make you believe in Providence or in that line from the movie "Field of Dreams": If you build it, they will come. You have a dream, build it.

They will come—in more ways than one. □

MONDAY, MARCH 20, 2006

OPINION



The Supreme Court as legitimizing agent

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.



WE ARE WONT TO SPEAK OF THE SUPREME Court as the last bulwark of our liberties and the ultimate defender of constitutionalism. That is the general truth. This is true because of the Court's power of judicial review which leads to the truism that the Constitution, including the Bill of Rights, means what the Supreme Court says it means. Thus it is that, in the history of our nation, there have been instances when the Supreme Court has legitimized official action offensive to human rights and disruptive of constitutionalism. Hence, as we await the decision of the current Supreme Court on the constitutionality of the gag rule in Executive Order 464, and of Proclamation 1017 and the various official actions it occasioned, as well as the uses of BP 880, it might be salutary to review how our Supreme Court has sometimes, to our national regret, played around with sacred constitutional principles.

We might start with the decision that initially legitimized the 1973 Constitution. In the "Ratification Cases" a majority of the Supreme Court were of the view that the Constitution proposed by the 1971 Constitutional Convention was not ratified in accordance with the requirements of the 1935 Constitution. In the end, however the Court accepted the cryptic conclusion that the new Constitution was already in effect.

At that time, martial law was already in effect by virtue of Proclamation No. 1081. When the validity of the imposition of martial law was challenged, there was near unanimity about the Court's inability to declare it invalid under the circumstances of the time. But the Court also held that the imposition of martial law automatically suspended the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus. Only Justice Cecilia Muñoz-Palma dissented. The 1987 Constitution would later reverse that decision saying that the imposition of martial law does not automatically suspend the privilege of the writ.

The next major decision upheld the wide-rang-

(Meanwhile, there are now media reports that the President is contemplating trial by military tribunal for suspected civilian smugglers.)

By September 1976, fully four years after the imposition of martial law and almost four years after the 1972 Constitution had taken effect, President Marcos had not yet convened the interim National Assembly mandated by the Constitution and he alone was the active legislative authority. It was in that same month and in that constitutional morass that Marcos, through presidential decrees, proposed a coordinated series of amendments the principal thrusts of which were (1) to consign the interim National Assembly to oblivion, (2) to create an interim Batasang Pambansa, and (3) to grant full and concurrent legislative power to the President. Thus the question was whether the President could propose amendments to the Constitution. The Supreme Court held he could. The main opinion also added that the "separation of executive and legislature ordained in the Constitution presents a distinct obstruction to efficient crisis government." Another Justice rubbed salt to the wounds of Philippine constitutionalism by arguing that the President had not proposed the amendments but had merely collated the amendments already proposed by the people in earlier referenda. Only Justices Claudio Teehankee and Muñoz-Palma dissented.

We are again at a crucial moment in our history when the Supreme Court is challenged to make decisions that can either weaken or strengthen constitutionalism in the Philippines. Meanwhile, the executive arm has been behaving as if martial law had been declared. Every official act so far done, unless contradicted by the Court, will continue to enjoy the presumption of legitimacy.

The Constitution says that the Supreme Court must decide cases submitted to it for decision within 24 months. We are, of course, hoping that the Court will not wait that long and that its decision will strengthen democratic processes.

Building a culture of quality education

"QUALITY EDUCATION IS ONLY FOR THE RICH STUDENTS. No one cares for the plight of poor students, especially in the Philippines. The government does not even care that the good and well-experienced teachers are leaving the country."

This message practically leapt out of my computer monitor the day after the commentary, titled "Quality education" (PDI, 3/13/06), of our board chair, Ms. Eggy Apostol, ap-

COMMENTARY

Butch Hernandez

What we believed was the limp response by the national government and education stakeholders to the problems facing today's public schools. (One of my chores as executive director of the Foundation for Worldwide People Power (FWWPP) is to review every piece of communication on Education Revolution that comes to our e-mail.)

The World Bank report on Philippine education, titled "Improving the Quality of Basic Education," succinctly states that "inputs into the education system have been either of poor quality, insufficient in amount, or not in the right mix." The document also points out that "many processes (e.g., teacher recruitment, deployment, in-service training, and promotion) are unwieldy and ineffective, and support mechanisms are not in place to help teachers do their job or students from impoverished or disadvantaged backgrounds attend good schools. Now is a good time to respond to the education crisis. Many other developing countries have been investing heavily in their educational development, leaving the Philippines to face tougher competition in the global economy."

The FWWPP's Education Revolution advocates sustained community involvement to help stem the crisis in our education system, especially in the aspect of quality education. This academic year, the FWWPP is introducing the concept of a performance-based support system to sustain organized initiatives that will improve education delivery at levels as deep as the barangay.

The object is to arrive at a "performance agreement" of sorts between the public school and the community it serves. The terms of the "agreement" are enumerated in a Strategic Plan jointly prepared by the school and the community. The achievement rates of its students as measured in standard diagnostic tests are the "currency of exchange" that the public school uses to unlock resources in the community.

Since we launched Education Revolution, specifically at the community level, we have been deluged with letters and calls from individuals and entities sharing in our belief that quality education is the best weapon against poverty. The statements of solidarity are very much appreciated and deeply encouraging. The problem is how to turn all this positive energy into a continuing community initiative. If you really want to help improve the quality of education in the public school in your own community, how and where do you start?

At the beginning, of course. By learning as much as you can about the state your chosen public school is in right now. You don't need to be an investigative reporter to do this. The basic information about the public school you are thinking of helping is quite accessible—as public documents—from a variety of sources. The Department of Education website at www.deped.gov.ph is a good place to start. More detailed information can be obtained from the Basic Education Information System (BEIS), a facility developed by Undersecretary Juan Miguel Lui. Please note though that the data go only up to academic year 2004. But they are still statistically valid.

From our own experience, we can confidently say that there is no scarcity of data. In fact, the reverse is true: there is so much information about the education sector that many community initiatives get sidetracked at this stage due to information overload. You'll come across such arcane terms like "cohort survival rate" and "inflation-adjusted budget allocation" and sinister-sounding acronyms like MOOE and SER. Most likely, you will be shocked by what you will discover: unbelievably substandard facilities, overcrowded classrooms to the point of bursting, poorly motivated teachers, and the list goes on.

After your initial information gathering, the next thing to do is to get more people in the community talk about quality education, what it means and why it is important to the community and not just to the teachers and the principal of the public school. In community development parlance, this is called "emphasizing stakeholders."

The focus of these preliminary community talks goes beyond just raising funds to build better school facilities. Yes, these things are also important, but finding creative ways to help our children "learn for life" should be our primary goal. For example, being able to really read—and not just mouth the words—is a basic "life skill." The DepEd says, by Grade III, the pupil should already be an independent reader.

In the course of your inquiry into the state of public education in your community, you are bound to uncover a myriad of reasons why Jaime or Anita—already in Grade VI—seems to find difficulty reading newspapers like the INQUIRER. The idea is to first make other people in the community aware of the problem. Putting together an organized education initiative that is premised on performance can come a bit later, when conditions are ripe. Remember that our goal is to build a culture of quality education.

The World Bank report mentioned earlier also says, "This is the important thread that needs to be woven [into all other efforts to improve basic education]. Many Filipinos are confused about what is meant by quality education. Many equate it with education credentials despite evidence that credentials do not necessarily correspond to learning competencies. Many also think that resources in schools (e.g., more computers, nicer buildings, more teachers) [are] a guarantee of good education despite evidence that well-endowed schools do not always deliver good instruction, while many poorer schools do."

Building a culture of quality [therefore] is to emphasize competency rather than credentials or inputs. It means defining performance targets and assessing performance against those targets, and regularly examining why those targets are not reached and what needs to be done."

The FWWPP will be glad to walk you through the crucial information-gathering stage, and answer any questions you might have. The DepEd's BEIS is available on CD. Just send us an e-mail should you want a copy, that is, if you haven't acquired one yet from the DepEd.

Most of all, we'd like to hear of any ideas you might have, to make the Education Revolution a national movement for quality education.

You may send e-mail to the author at execdir@fwwp.org.ph.

Life



KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Carlos Isagani T. Zarate

"I'M RUNNING THROUGH A GAMUT OF EMOTIONS." This was how Ateneo de Davao University Prof. Luz Ilagan described her feelings at a press conference last week, as she denounced the "malicious and ridiculous" inclusion of her name in a rebellion complaint filed by police authorities at the Department of Justice.

No stranger to draconian rule—a family member was imprisoned during the Marcos regime—Ilagan has all the reasons to be apprehensive, angry—and yes—even defiant. "It's déjà vu. We are going through repression all over again. But we have to fight for our rights."

Luz is the widow of the late Davao legal luminary Laurente Ilagan, who was jailed in 1985, together with two other Davao lawyers—Marcos Risonar and Antonio Arellano—by force of the dreaded Preventative Detention Action (PDA) which allowed warrantless arrests.

The case of the three Davao lawyers is now enshrined in Philippine jurisprudence as the "Ilagan Doctrine" (Ilagan vs. Enrile, 139 SCRA 349).

The soft-spoken current national chair of the Gabriea Women's Party-List (her partymate, Rep. Liza Maza, is among the "housemates" currently under protective custody of the House of Representatives), Ilagan was a former Davao City councilor. She was among the first appointees of the Aquino administration following the 1986 People Power Revolution.

While she was in Davao City for the International Women's Day last March 8, the police Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management in Manila included her in a charge sheet for rebellion. Also in the charge sheet were Davao-based militant leaders Bayan Muna Rep. Joey Villador, Ariel Castiao of Bayan, Editha Duterte of the urban poor group Kadamay, Omar Baytanay of Kilusang Mayo Uno, Jeppe Ramada of Bayan Muna, Antonio Flores of Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, Cora Espinosa of Samarkana and Lorie Ann Cascaro of Anakbayan youth sector.

The charge sheet is based on the joint affidavit of PNP intelligence operatives Franco S. Duca and Rex Rodriguez and on photos showing the

march-rally led by Ilagan and her group during the Feb. 24 commemoration of EDSA I.

"It is not only baseless but, more importantly, it is ridiculous," said lawyer Angela Librando-Trinidad, chair of the city council's committee on women and children.

Here are the "ridiculous" allegations, that the police authorities claim constitute rebellion: "OMGass action rally particularly at the freedom park ... said personalities were involved in the aggressive actions to destabilize (sic) the Philippine government ... (they) started to march from freedom park passing along the main streets and ... at centennial park ... they shouted their politically inclined beliefs to establish a transitional council to replace (sic) the Arroyo Regime and to OUST PGMA and all other related issues to opposed (sic) the government interest... strongly opposed for the immediate resignation of PGMA."

The charge sheet is not only baseless but it is also unbelievable. It cannot even approach the definition of rebellion as defined in the Revised Penal Code," commented Caesar Europa, president of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines-Davao City Chapter. "At least the Marcos dictatorship (was) predictable" and had no pretenses about employing dictatorial measures, he added.

"This administration is more dangerous because it is doble-cara, pretending to be democratic but employing draconian measures to silence its critics," Ilagan said.

Of the "Davao 8," only Antonio Flores of KMP had faced similar charges in the past. Flores, a militant peasant leader, was charged in 2001 and imprisoned for more than a year for the crime of

rebellion and illegal possession of firearms. He was later acquitted on both charges.

"If fighting for the rights of the peasants and calling for the ouster of a fake president are an act of rebellion, then so be it. I will not be cowed by this latest trumped-up charge against us," Flores said.

Given the state of paranoia currently bedeviling the Arroyo administration, it would not be surprising if in the coming days more ridiculous charges are leveled against those perceived as "destabilizers and enemies of the state."

The administration could become more brazen in filing these charges as it continues to conduct a massive witch-hunt of its perceived enemies—in the political opposition, and even in the press. In Cagayan de Oro, for example, our chair in the Union of Peoples' Lawyers in Mindanao (UPLM), Fred Gapaz, reportedly has been included in the military's "order of battle" for his being a critic of the Arroyo administration. Last Friday's arrest of former Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman is another indication of this trend. So under the beleaguered Arroyo administration, walking along a major Metro Manila thoroughfare, while wearing a black T-shirt with a provocative slogan, is already a crime!

Indeed, even with its so-called lifting, Proclamation 1017 remains the real "residual threat" to our constitutionally guaranteed rights.

The continued crackdown on the political opposition and the critical press is a clear indicator that the Arroyo administration will employ all measures, legal or otherwise, to ensure its survival.

"These trumped-up charges against me and my colleagues are part of life," Ilagan said as she vowed that oppression and injustice "will not deter us, life goes on."

Incidentally, when her husband was arrested in 1985, "life" was taken to mean "Larry Ilagan Forever." This time around, "life" may as well mean "Luz Ilagan Forever" and "Laban is Forever."

Comments at kazs@ateneo.edu or kazs_23@hotmail.com

Fashion police

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III



tion catching "V for Vendetta" later that evening.

Apparently, some of the police, safely behind Mr. Policeman's back, agreed with those in black. Quite a few nodded with every question asked by those in black.

But Mr. Policeman was not to let the future be. When the people in black decided they might as well cross the street individually, Mr. Policeman had them surrounded, then arrested two of them. Mr. Policeman bundled the two to his precinct, and eventually decided—after more phoning around—to hand over the two to more policemen at their castle-like headquarters, where the policemen spent a couple of hours figuring out how to make the law apply to those in black.

The law is harsh, but it is the law; we must have the rule of law! It goes like this:

"You're bad."
"Why?"
"Because!"

This is known as political will, even if it entails a lot of humdrum leafing through law books and calling-up superiors. In the meantime, we wanted.

As we waited, one person in black asked a rather high-ranking policeman (who seemed particularly keen on the goings-on), "Sir, what is your name?" The Very Important Policeman (VIP) gave the person a dirty look, as if the latter had said something dirty (like "human rights"). The VIP gave his name and asked, "Why do you want to know?" The person in black said, "Well, I just wanted to know to see whether you're on our side." ("Our," meaning, of course, the citizenry, which has the right to ask policemen their names.) The VIP scowled. "I don't work for you. I work for the government." God Save the Queen.

The VIP left, reappeared in civilian clothes, directed two flunkies to carry a large basket to his vehicle, stood around sneering at no one in particular for some time, then left to be reunited with his basket and possibly to do some off-duty sneering.

Finally, the law was discovered to somehow apply to what the police carefully typed in their complaint as a "lightning rally." It must have been an honest Freudian slip concerning Hizzoner the Mayor's multi-watt extravaganza along the Baywalk. The police would next bring the arrested two to face a prosecutor in the Manila City Hall.

In the City Hall, sitting outside the prosecutor's office, I noticed that many of the other prosecutor's offices had shiny posters featuring Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez. Except someone had "ball-peened," on quite a few of the posters, a little Charlie Chaplin moustache on Gonzalez. How funny, I thought.

Eventually the prosecutor decided that, well, perhaps things deserved a more thorough investigation. The lawyers agreed. So many questions! This might just be a case for the ages. Go home and wait for your subpoena, the tired prosecutor told those who'd been arrested.

As we went home, a small group of people who had gathered outside City Hall raised their fists and sang "Bayan Ko." Some had lit candles and placed them on the sidewalk. They chanted complimentary things about those who'd been arrested, and some uncomplimentary things about the President in whose name they'd been arrested. Now that was a protest. A rally, even. But no one was arrested. And I remembered a slogan Fred Lim coined when he was still mayor of Manila. I went like this: "The law applies to all, otherwise none at all."

Not the best English, but in retrospect, not a bad thought. One that explains perfectly well why people wear black (slogan or no slogan on the T-shirt), protest, demonstrate and otherwise speak their mind: We cannot continue to have a Republic whose strength is measured by the forcefulness with which the law is applied only against those who insist on the old-fashioned notion that a President never is, and never should be, confused with the totality of the State.

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Substandard RP passports



THIS IS TO CALL THE ATTENTION of the passport division of the Department of Foreign Affairs to the substandard materials being used in Philippine passports.

The plastic lamination over my passport photo was torn when an immigration officer abroad opened my passport. My experience was not an isolated case. I learned from several colleagues that they, too, had the same experience.

—LOURDES BERNARDO,
1221 Bocobo St., Malate, Manila

I urge the DFA to look into the matter and come up with measures to ensure that Philippine passports can withstand reasonable wear and tear. I had to have my passport replaced because the embassies where I had to apply for a visa would not accept passports with torn laminations.

—LOURDES BERNARDO,
1221 Bocobo St., Malate, Manila

Go Gloria, good luck, Philippines

THE STATE HAS THE RIGHT TO DEFEND ITSELF from chaos and anarchy and lawlessness. I support Presidential Proclamation 1017. It is time that we contained the destabilizers and the self-proclaimed "defenders" of our democracy. They have been making a lot of noise about just anything to pin down President Macapagal-Arroyo. They have scooped up all the dirt in the world to throw at her face.

My question is: what have these destabilizers contributed to improve the lives of our people? Some of them are former senators, civic leaders and government officials. The "fears"

of people who are supposed to be "concerned" about democratic values are unfounded, unwarranted and exaggerated. They are just making an issue out of nothing.

Since the issuance of Proclamation 1017, has there been a citizen arrested innocently? The people who have been arrested are those who prominently played a role in the coup. Their destabilization efforts did not prosper because people sensed their bad motives and evil ends. People know love of country when they see one. If the GMA-bashers really love the Philippines, they should be working for prosperity and peace.

Those of us working abroad are monitoring closely the situation there. We can only have a sigh of relief with Proclamation 1017. I am not a fan of the President, but I say, "Go, Gloria, go!" Hunt down the evil people and the cowards and the selfish and the greedy.

It is time that the government flexed its muscles. GMA should not accept a mere push-up as punishment for the military men involved in the coup. She should court-martial them, and charge the civilians in court. Good luck Philippines!

—JUDE SANSON,
tamildes@yahoo.com

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'Righteousness makes a nation great'

THE EDSA I REVOLUTION IS SUPPOSED TO be one of the most glorious moments in the history of the Philippines and of the world. It gave birth to People Power and paved the way for the downfall of an oppressive regime. But the 20th anniversary celebration of People Power did not push through because the President proclaimed a state of national emergency, by force of which people were prohibited from gathering at the EDSA Shrine.

Those who defied the proclamation were forcibly dispersed by the police with water cannons and truncheons. Others were arrested and detained. What irony. The primary beneficiary of People Power II has now become the nemesis of People Power.

"Righteousness makes a nation great; sin is a disgrace to any nation." (Proverbs 14:34) Ferdinand Marcos and Joseph Estrada did not heed this wise counsel and they were deposed by People Power. President Macapagal-Arroyo must learn from history and should avoid repeating it.

A nation like the Philippines can be great if righteousness and justice reign. But if the sins of injustice, graft and corruption, influence-peddling and the like, continue unabated, then we will remain a nation of "hewers of wood and drawers of water." We will continue to be a nation mired in poverty and corruption. Moses warns those who keep on sinning: "You can be sure that your sin will track you down." (Numbers 32:23)

Let us, leaders and people, heed the Proverbs. Let GMA lead us to righteousness and justice if she wants to remain in power. "Let justice flow like a stream, and righteousness like a river that never goes dry." (Amos 5:24)

Shall we continue in sin and remain in disgrace? No! We admonish the President to lead us to repentance. May God have mercy on us!

—SOLITO K. TOQUERO,
bishop, The United Methodist Church,
Manila Episcopal Area

THE HELLO GARCIA SCANDAL THAT OUTRAGED Filipinos middle of last year refuses to die. It continues to smolder. Clearly at issue is the legitimacy of the current President amid allegations of massive fraud and cheating exposed by the Hello Garcia tapes. It is also clear the people have not been appeased by the action of Congress to vote down the impeachment process.

comes now the proposal to resolve the problem by shifting to a parliamentary form of government through Charter change. The President was only too willing to create a Constitutional Commission which acted with amazing speed in submitting proposed changes to the 1987 Constitution.

We view the whole process of the Charter change with alarm. The timing of the proposal to amend the Constitution and shift to a parliamentary form of government is suspect. Some of the provisions that are being eyed for amendment are those that seek to protect our right to self-determination, our country's integrity and our people's dignity against the rapacious greed for commerce.

Charter change is being proposed at a time when the executive branch of government is being indicted by the people for graft and corruption, election fraud, subservience to foreign dictates and insensitivity to the larger issues.

IN THE FAILED MILITARY COUP ATTEMPTS, we are merely reaping the wages of "back-to-the-barracks" and "20-push-ups" military justice. Not surprisingly, the ones protesting the government's decisive move (Proclamation 1017) to preserve the State were the most responsible for allowing the preservation of the politicized military we have to deal with today.

If then Defense Secretary Fidel Ramos had meted out genuine military justice to the 1989 putschists—among them, Gringo Honasan, Danilo Lim and Ariel Querubin—we would not have to face military adventurism every once so often. For those who bear arms for the State, the obligation to respect the Constitution and constitutional authority is unconditional. If they want to be political players, they should divest themselves of their arms.

Neither Ramos nor Cory Aquino, who let the genie out of the bottle in 1986 and failed to put it back in 1989, has the moral ascendancy to lecture us on Proclamation 1017.

—CENON MAKALINAO,
cmakalinao@yahoo.com

Genuine change, not just Charter change

THE PROBLEM OF GENUINE change is being rammed down our throats at a time of deep social, economic and political crisis. Charter change is inspired more by President Macapagal-Arroyo's desperate need for political survival rather than by the primordial interest of the citizens of this republic.

Amending the Constitution and changing the form of government are not the solution to the ills now plaguing this country. Ferreting out the truth and letting the wheels of justice take their course are the means by which change can come about. Addressing the roots of the problems of poverty, corruption, war and governance is the only way we can get on the road to genuine change.

We oppose the move to amend the 1987 Constitution.

We call on our church leaders to start a massive education campaign and to expose the dire consequences of such a move.

We are launching the Church Forum Against Charter Change which, in cooperation with other objectors, will plan and coordinate the courses of action of church people opposed to Charter change.

—SIGNED BY 13 MEMBERS
OF CHURCHPEOPLE'S FORUM AGAINST
CHARTER CHANGE
c/o ecumenicalbishops@yahoo.com

No moral ascendancy to lecture on 1017

IN THE FAILED MILITARY COUP ATTEMPTS, we are merely reaping the wages of "back-to-the-barracks" and "20-push-ups" military justice.

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—CENON MAKALINAO,
cmakalinao@yahoo.com

PNP first before the media

BEFORE GEN. ARTURO LOMIBAO imposes guidelines on the media, he should first issue guidelines to his own men, over whom he seems to have no control.

This letter concerns especially the policemen manning traffic in Metro Manila. All through Edsa, you see buses loading and unloading passengers in the middle of the highway, putting them at risk, because the drivers are too lazy to go to the loading/unloading areas.

Along Commonwealth Avenue and Quezon Avenue in Quezon City, jeepneys and buses pile up at loading/unloading zones, taking up most of the lanes so that traffic gets congested. In-between, they also load and unload in the center of the road. Not only that, they weave over to the innermost lane to get past other vehicles, then suddenly swerve to the right to unload passengers in the middle lanes. Accidents are only avoided due to the alertness of the other drivers whose path they cut.

All throughout Espana, it is the same thing. Sometimes, the traffic congestion stretches all the way from Quapo to UST and even beyond, on the southbound lanes, because the jeepneys, FX taxis and buses are loading or unloading passengers—especially in no loading/unloading areas, like the exit in the Larma-to-Quapo underpass.

There is a loading/unloading area, but this is ignored with impunity by jeepney drivers—as long as they fork over P5 to the candy and sampaguita vendors who are said to be "collectors" of

the traffic enforcers.

The authorities put up a divider on the stretch leading to Quezon Bridge, but it seems not to do the job of ensuring smooth traffic flow (if that was the intention, in the first place, or was it for "other reasons"?), as jeepneys going to Quapo-Ilalim use the lane inside the divider to load and unload passengers—again, this is a no-loading/unloading zone.

The same situation exists along Taft Avenue and all other streets going south, north, west or east where jeepneys abound. The jeepney driver takes his "king of the road" status very seriously, while traffic enforcers look the other way.

The only solution to our traffic problems in Metro Manila is for the traffic enforcers to really enforce traffic. Lomibao should look into this instead of cluttering his mind with the pros and cons of politics in the media.

Let the media do their work unhampered and without intimidation. Make the policemen on the beat do their work. It doesn't take a miracle to control Lomibao's subordinates, only a bit of hands-on management.

He should also look into the "reasons" why the police can be bullies toward peaceful rallies but remain helpless in the face of traffic snarls caused by their own negligence.

—MITOS S. GARCIA,
c/o National Press Club,
Magallanes Drive,
Intramuros, Manila

A 'moot and academic' question?

I REFER TO THE INQUIRER NEWS report "Gov't argues petition vs 1017 moot." (PDI, 3/7/06)

If the cars of the lawyers who are defending Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's Proclamation 1017 were stolen, but later returned to them

by the car thief, could the latter plead that he has no case to answer because the crime has become "moot and academic"?

—JAIN ROGERS,
Flat 4/B, 1-3 Shin Hing St.,
Hong Kong

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(1) Application forms and relevant information regarding the examinations may be downloaded from the Department of Foreign Affairs website (www.dfa.gov.ph). Forms may also be obtained personally or requested through mail from the following offices of the Department of Foreign Affairs:

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2 rebels, soldier slain in Cebu clash

By Jhunnex Napallacan and Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—TWO NEW PEOPLE'S ARMY (NPA) rebels, including a top leader, and one soldier were killed in an encounter yesterday in a village in Tabuelan town, 86.9 km north of the city.

Military and police officials identified one of the rebels as Jimmy Badayos, alleged secretary of the NPA Front Committee 2 operating in one city and eight towns in the mid-north Cebu area. His aliases included Warren, Jin, Vassily and Cyrus.

"Being a secretary of Front 2, Badayos was actually the top leader and right-hand of Central Visayas Regional Party Commit-

tee of the CPP-NPA head Kumanader Ray Ercere," said Lt. Col. Jefferson Omandan, Armed Forces Central Command (Centcom) spokesperson.

He said the death of Badayos was a big setback to the NPA unit operating in Danao City and the towns of Balamban, Asturias, Tuburan, Tabuelan, Catmon, Carmen, part of Com-

postela and Sogod.

The other rebel fatality was identified as Guillermo Alburu, alias Jed.

Omandan refused to identify the lone government fatality pending notification of his family. But he said the soldier had the rank of private first class and suffered two bullet wounds in the chest.

About 50 Tabuelan policemen and soldiers of the 78th Infantry Battalion went to Sitio Kalumbisan, Barangay Dahid in Tabuelan to check reports of the presence of armed men in the area.

Omandan said the team was fired upon by about 20 rebels at 7:21 a.m. An exchange of gunfire ensued, which lasted more than hour, ensued.

Police provincial director Senior Supt. Vicente Loot said the bodies of Badayos and Alburu were brought to the town's sports complex and later to a funeral home in this city for autopsy.

In Escalante City, Negros Occidental, at least 40 NPA rebels fled with nine high-powered firearms

yesterday morning after raiding the detachment of the PNP's 1st Regional Mobile Group.

NPA attack

Provincial police director Senior Supt. Charles Calima said the rebels took two M-14 rifles, two M-16 rifles, three Garand rifles, a .45 cal. pistol and an M-60 machine gun from the detachment at Sitio Cubay, Barangay Malasibog in Escalante, 102.1 km north of Bacolod City.

No one was hurt among the two policemen and eight Civilian Volunteers Organization members who were on duty at that time, said Calima.

He said the 10 were caught off-guard while having breakfast

when 30-40 guerrillas barged in to the detachment at 6 a.m.

The police personnel had returned to the detachment at about 3 p.m. after securing a nearby fiesta dance.

An Army intelligence officer, who asked not to be named, told the INQUIRER that some of those on duty were sleeping in their quarters when the raiders came.

Calima said the detachment personnel led by PO3 Antonio Bravo and 1st RMG Chief Flomar, Nataniel, had been relieved from their post following the incident.

Chief Supt. Doroteo Reyes, police director for Western Visayas, arrived in Negros Occidental to supervise pursuit operations against the raiders.

Dynamite blasting scaring whales in Babuyan

By Blanche S. Rivera

FISHERMEN IN THE ONCE TRANQUIL Babuyan Islands in Cagayan province are literally having a blast.

Local fishermen, citing poor catch in recent months, have resorted to dynamite blasting to salvage metal from shipwrecks surrounding the islands, according to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF)-Philippines.

It is said to be the newest and most environmentally damaging source of livelihood in the islands, said the WWF, which conducts an annual on-site monitoring of the Babuyan Islands for its Humpback Whale Research and Development Project.

The blasting are scaring away the Pacific humpback whales that come to the Philippines to breed this time of the year, it said.

The dynamite blasts were also inevitably destroying the coral reefs in the Camiguin Island, where the blasts have been monitored.

The WWF records an average of 100 sightings in the Babuyan Islands annually but fears that this would be reduced due to the dynamite blasts.

"We will continue to monitor the whales to see if the blasting has a direct impact on the whales ... although definitely there must be permanent damage to the coral reefs in the area," WWF consultant Jomarie Acebes said in a phone interview.

Located about 50 km north of the Luzon mainland, the Babuyan Islands has the highest known cetacean species diversity in the Philippines, hosting 14 of the 25 known cetacean species in the world including the humpback whale, sperm whale and bottle-nosed dolphin.

The WWF team that arrived in Camiguin Island north of Cagayan province on Feb. 17 has recorded up to six blasts per hour almost daily. On March 18, just days after the Calayan police arrived in Camiguin, four blasts were recorded again.

"The blasts are really loud. You can hear it even up to eight kilometers from the shore. That's very loud considering that the dynamites explode under water," Acebes said.

The locals themselves have admitted that those who go out for blasting use about a gallon of dynamite for every trip, she said. They dive to plant the dynamites in the shipwrecks and then recover the steel that comes loose due to the explosion.

The scrap metals are sold in the island for about P4 per kilo. The dealer from the island then sells the scrap in Aparsi or Cagayan for about P10 per kilo, Acebes said.

There are at least five known shipwrecks surrounding Camiguin Island, all of which are in the breeding ground of humpback whales that travel to the Babuyan Islands before proceeding to Alas-

ka and Russia to feed.

The shipwrecks, which are more than 20 years old, have become artificial reefs that serve as refuge and breeding ground for fish.

Acebes said the locals have been salvaging metal from the shipwrecks for about two years now, but they used to dive and use acetylene to recover the loose scraps.

The locals have only started to use dynamites the past months because they wanted to get bigger pieces of metal, she said.

The Cagayan provincial government passed an ordinance in 2003 declaring the humpback whales as protected species within the territorial jurisdiction of the province.

The WWF has written Calayan Mayor Joseph Llopus to inform him of the blasting. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources have also been informed of the illegal activity.

The Calayan police have also visited Camiguin and apprehended the locals for the blasting but the WWF revealed that no police report has been filed in Calayan about the blasts.

Pressures such as illegal hunting and overfishing have threatened the global population of cetaceans. Humpbacks are listed as endangered under the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and the US Endangered Species Act.



A PAGE from the book "Moonbeams" illustrated with rubber cuts by Leonardo Aguinaldo, 2004 Grand Prize winner of the ASEAN Art Award.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Environmentalism as told to kids

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—AN ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY group thinks preaching the values of tree fairies to schoolchildren will get Mother Earth more mileage than protest marches.

The Cordillera Green Network Inc., a

Baguio-based reforestation crusader, launched on March 12 a children's book called "Moonbeams," one of 129 stories submitted to CGN's first ecological writing competition in 2005. CGN plans to publish most of these children's stories as part of a new advocacy strategy.

"We want to teach environmentalism, but we realize that if we are fighting for our children, we must show the children what the fight is all about. So we are producing children's books to promote the management of the environment instead," said filmmaker Jo Banasan, CGN executive director.

Banasan said CGN did not expect to find a wealth of stories from contest entries.

A story called "Tallings' Dam," by Maureen Loste, explores a child's experience with a mine, and these are some of the stories now being lined up for publishing, Banasan said.

Loste and her husband, Manuel Bayan Muna, national vice chair, have been opposing corporate mining.

"CGN is all about promoting the soul [of ecology], and we want to offer information that is accessible to everyone, especially children of the Cordillera, where [old school] mining and logging have contributed to the destruction of the region's virgin forests," she said.

CGN principally espouses reforestation.

Ties with the Japan Fund for Global Environment and the Kiyosato Educational and Experiment Project allowed CGN to create a 20-hectare tree nurturing facility in Benguet, and another 20-hectare tree farm in Apayao.

All these efforts will go to once communities stop sustaining these forests, "which is why it is important for children to understand the legacy we are leaving them," Banasan said.

"Children understand stories because stories are always magical. In Kalinga where I grew up, I always looked forward to visiting the fields where a storyteller stays. I enjoyed those stories, so I am certain children of today will enjoy CGN's stories," she said.

"Moonbeams," written by Baguio-based freelance writer Nonette Bennett, took the CGN contest's top prize, and was selected as its first book because it was a story "with no borders," Banasan said.

Illustrated by Leonardo Aguinaldo, 2004 ASEAN Art Award grand prize winner, "Moonbeams," tells the story of siblings Ambic and Ambit who live on a mountain.

The children frequent a waterfall to visit tree fairies, formed from moonbeams cast at the highland's calm surface every night.

But the adults of their community no longer believe in fairies, and they ignore the children's plea, when they allow farmer Pedep to clear a section of the mountain forest for his vegetable garden.

The fairies disappear, and in their absence, the gardens dry up and the mountain loses its resources.

Banasan said like many other stories submitted to CGN, "Moonbeams" presents children both the ideal and the practical points of view.

Bennett's story allows children to understand why the farmer needed to clear the forests, while exploring the consequences of his actions.

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MONDAY, MARCH 20, 2006

3-YEAR UP STUDY

Visayas kids face risks of lead poisoning

By Hazel P. Villa
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—CHILDREN AGED 5 YEARS OLD and below in the Visayas may be facing risks of lead poisoning, a three-year health study indicated.

The study, conducted by Dr. Orville Solon of the University of the Philippines' School of Economics in Diliman, Quezon City, found 1,294 children from 11 Visayan provinces with lead levels in their bloodstream way beyond the hazard limit.

The children had lead in the blood of up to 20 micrograms per deciliter, about twice the 10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ allowable limit, the study showed.

The number represented 30 percent of 4,312 children whose blood was tested for the study. The children were from Capiz, Iloilo, Negros Occidental, Bohol, Cebu, Negros Oriental, Siquijor, Camiguin, Biliran, Leyte and Eastern Samar.

Solon, a health economist, presented his study, titled "Results from the Quality Improvement Demonstration Study (QIDS): An Unanticipated Finding of Lead Exposure in Children 5 and Younger" on the second day of the 2nd National Conference on Population, Health and Environment held March 15-17 at the Waterfront Hotel here.

The conference was convened by the Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and the Development Foundation, Inc.

Study results showed that more than 10 percent of children tested in Bohol, Negros Oriental, Biliran and Leyte had lead levels in the blood greater than $20 \mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$.

A smaller percentage of those from other provinces had $10-20 \mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$.

Solon found that seven of the 16 identified potential exposure sources for lead had a range of lead concentration near or beyond the hazard limits as determined by applicable US regulatory agencies.

The children found with lead in the blood were greatly exposed to paint chips, dust, wipes, canned tuna, candy wrappers, gasoline, motor oil and fishing weights.

The mean lead found in the blood of the 4,312 tested children was $9.40 \mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$, near the cut-off of $10 \mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ as stipulated by the Center for Disease Control.

Elizabeth Butrick, project manager of the QIDS, said any amount of lead in the blood is dangerous.

IN THE KNOW

High lead content means:



- With $10 \mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ in blood
Slight loss in IQ
Hearing and growth problems
- With $20 \mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ in blood
Moderate loss in IQ
Hyperactivity
Poor attention span
Difficulty in learning
Language and speech problems
Slower reflexes

The range of concentration of lead from exposure to gasoline as found in the bodies of the children was 4.6 to 24.6 parts per million (ppm). The hazard limit is 13 ppm.

Candy wrappers and gasoline are not supposed to have any lead in them, but Solon's study found that children exposed to such had lead in their blood.

About 530 to 120,000 ppm of lead from paint chips were also found in the children's blood. The hazard limit is 5,000 ppm.

Lead from motor oil and fishing weights were also found. These had no registered hazard limits because these were not regulated.

Solon said lead poisoning was a serious problem because the potential consequences of high lead levels in children would be acute neural toxicity, cognitive and behavioral impairment and developmental delays, with anemic children more at risk because they absorb more lead.

The study said the IQ (intelligence quotient) levels of children with "elevated lead levels" in their blood averaged 90.

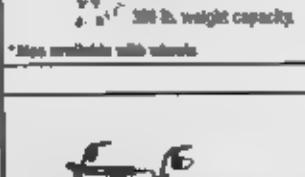
"This IQ ... is problematic," said Solon, who said QIDS spent \$10 per blood test (or about P500 at the time the study was conducted in 2002-05).

Solon said the Department of Energy and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources were already informed of their findings last year.

Their response was that they called on their regional units to talk to the parents of the children but they (the two departments) have not developed very specific actions to face the lead problem," said Solon in an interview after his presentation.

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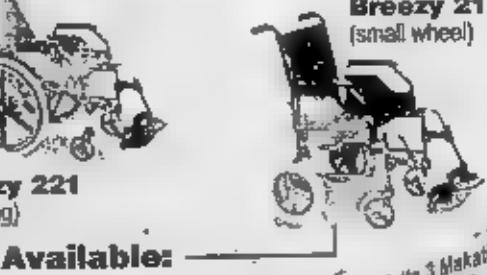


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Is entertaining the public illegal? Joker asks cops

From page A1
help but ask this question even as they decried the arrest and detention of former Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman on Friday.

Soliman was arrested and hauled off to Manila police headquarters together with Vicente Romano, lead convenor of the anti-Arroyo Black and White Movement (BWM), for alleged illegal assembly. They were released after five hours.

"You mean I can't wear anything, ask my friends to join me, talk and denounce the government? I don't think you're violating any law [if you do these things]," Senator Arroyo said in an interview.

Soliman and some 50 BWM members were mostly clad in black T-shirts embossed with the message "Patsalsikin na. NOW NAI (Out now!)".

As far as he knew, Arroyo, a human rights lawyer during martial law, said Soliman had neither obstructed traffic nor inconvenienced the public when she and other BWM members tried to cross Roxas Boulevard toward Baywalk.

"Where's the unlawful act of Dinky? If at all, she only entertained the public," the senator said.

One could be charged with violating Batas Pambansa Bilang 880, or the Public Assembly Act, if he or she causes traffic obstruction and public inconvenience during a public gathering, according to Arroyo.

Biazon held the same view. "What's the charge? I can't accept the charge that they were out there to conduct a rally without a permit. How many people should there be before an activity can be considered a rally?" he said.

"Did they have banners or flags? Were they obstructing traffic? Were they inconveniencing the public? Were they creating lawless

violence? I don't think so," Biazon added in an interview.

Biazon demanded that the arresting officers state clearly the law that they used to haul Soliman and her companions off to the Western Police District for questioning on Friday night.

Police had argued that the group, vocal critics of the Arroyo administration known for holding protest rallies, had engaged in a political activity and violated the Illegal Assembly Act.

Gray area

The wearing of antigovernment T-shirts per se by an individual or a group of people is not illegal, police Director Vidal Querol clarified yesterday.

But the wearing of such shirts "with the intention to conduct a lightning strike" in a public area could be illegal, according to PNP spokesperson Senior Supt. Samuel Pagdilao.

And between these two actions, there was a "gray area," both officers acknowledged.

There are no hard and fast rules, and what is illegal is left to the judgment of the ground commander, they said.

Biazon said the arrest and detention of Soliman and Romano only added to the woes of the administration as a result of its issuance of Presidential Proclamation No. 1017.

"Although PP 1017 had been lifted, its effect of sending a chill down the spine of freedom-loving Filipino citizens continues to linger," he said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo issued PP 1017 and placed the country under a state of emergency on Feb. 24 after the military uncovered a coup plot. It was lifted a week later.

"Suddenly, this government wants you to get a permit for every little act. This can only happen in North Korea," Arroyo said.

events on TV following the issuance of Presidential Proclamation No. 1017 have been left with the abiding image of Philippine democracy in total disarray and of a country taken over by a cabal of disgruntled and restive generals and colonels.

For weeks, there was no getting away from the overbearing presence of soldiers on national TV screens and newspaper front pages.

The ubiquitous presence of generals and colonels on the radar screen was so overpowering that it left little doubt that the military and police were in fact in charge, and the civilian government reduced to a mere figurehead.

While the constitutional Commander in Chief, Ms Arroyo, tried to assert her authority, she virtually disappeared from public view.

Invisible

National TV was overcrowded with men in fatigues, strutting on center stage, pushing civilian leaders to the sidelines and reducing civil authority to an invisible government.

After Feb. 24, the civil institutions, especially Congress, which normally had been very combative and aggressive in trying to push Ms Arroyo out of power, lost their pugnacious voices and became invisible, as the soldiers empowered by emergency measures contemporaneously ignored the existence of

senators. Whom did we see on center stage while the President, the alleged Commander in Chief, was pushed to the background?

They were people in combat fatigues like Brig. Gen. Danilo Lam of the Scout Rangers; Col. Ariel Querubin of the Marines; Gen. Generoso Senga, the AFP chief of staff, and Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, the Army chief.

Arrogance

They were joined by Philippine National Police Director General Arturo Lumibao and the AFP spokesperson, Col. Tristan Kison, who rose from obscurity with the statement warning the "enemies of the state" against making the military the target of "destabilization," because "we are one of the strong pillars holding the nation."

"If we break, the nation will collapse," Kison had said.

Nothing has matched the arrogance of Kison since the fugitive Col. Gregorio Honasan launched coups in the second half of the 1980s.

Control of AFP in doubt

It was Senga, not the constitutional Commander in Chief, who laid down the rule that, as mandated by the Constitution, "we [the military] must remain an apolitical force" and that "we are not to be regarded as a potential political force to be used by politicians in the furtherance of their vested interests."

Like Ms Arroyo, Senga, whose

loyalty to the Commander in Chief was in doubt on Feb. 24 when the coup was aborted, does not appear to be in control of the

On Feb. 26, when Querubin and other Marines protested the relief of their commander, his disclosure that he and his men had planned to join a rally in Makati City on Feb. 24 represented an extraconstitutional move to seize power and replace the government with a "transition council."

The rally was aimed at sparking a wide civilian insurrection to topple Ms Arroyo.

Following the proclamation of the state of emergency, it was Lumibao to whom the President surrendered the power to crack down on the media and to lay down the "guidelines" for the closure of newspapers and TV networks, and the arrest of those implicated in a conspiracy of the Left, "adventurist" officers and mainstream opposition politicians to overthrow the administration.

Erosion of civilian authority

Thus, the erosion of civilian authority came from two sources inside the military—the renegade officers who were linked to the coup plot and the military officers in charge of the mopping-up operations against those who allegedly conspired to oust Ms Arroyo.

While the emergency proclamation enabled the government to abort the coup attempt, it created a more serious problem, which threatens its survival and

that of constitutional democracy.

It gave the military a franchise to implement repressive security measures and to reassert messianic interventionism that had been lurking just underneath the surface since 1986.

The state of emergency allowed the soldiers, on whom the civilian government is more dependent than ever, to enforce repressive measures on civil society and to hold the government hostage.

The weeks following the aborted coup have not only been a field day for the soldiers to be in the limelight.

The period also gave the soldiers a moment to bask in the glory of power usurped from civilian authority, such that Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, a former AFP chief of staff, could not quite keep himself in the background.

He had crossed over to the realm of military intervention for a piece of the action by trying to calm down the Marines in the Fort Bonifacio standoff, not to save the Arroyo administration but, according to him, to avert soldiers from shooting one another.

Indeed, the President crushed the coup, with the aid of a segment of the military. But she now faces the more dangerous conspiracy of soldiers whose appetite for grabbing power has been revived by a fresh injection of its power of life and death over disembodied civilian political institutions and civil society.

RP most endangered democracy in Asia

From page A1

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While the emergency proclamation enabled the government to abort the coup attempt, it created a more serious problem, which threatens its survival and

"Imagine how many parlors are out there .. We have the country surrounded," Remoto noted.

Antidiscrimination

Ang Ladlad will be taking up serious LGBT issues, foremost of which is discrimination.

Remoto said many LGBT, especially gays, were either not hired or not promoted because of their gender. In banks, for example, gays are often turned down despite good grades and passing exams.

"They have this notion that gays would just give money to their boyfriends, which is a stereotype," he said.

He cited an exclusive boys' school in Manila where its authorities would require parents or guardians of student applicants to sign a "pink slip" assuring the school that their boys did not exhibit effeminate tendencies.

In the provinces, the discrimination was harsher, with gays limited to beauty parlors, often receiving verbal and physical abuse from classmates, neighbors and even policemen who pick them up for vagrancy.

Surprisingly, Ang Ladlad did not include same-sex marriage in its platform, a touchy issue which is opposed by the Catholic Church, conservative groups like Opus Dei, and even Muslims who account for 5.1 percent (based on the 2000 census) of the population.

"Same-sex marriage is a very middle-class concern. We want to make our advocacy—such as antidiscrimination—a human rights issue," Remoto said.

Gay pride

Ang Ladlad will also push for microfinancing and livelihood opportunities for LGBT, as well as drop-in centers for "golden gays" and young LGBT who have been driven from home by their families.

"Not all gay men want to become hairdressers, and not all lesbians want to become bus conductors or security guards," Remoto said.

Politicians, hairdressers

Politicians, including a senatorial candidate and local candidates in Luzon and Mindanao, have agreed to carry Ang Ladlad in their campaign programs and materials, Remoto said.

Hairdressers, fashion designers, directors and showbiz personalities, artists, hotel owners, bakery proprietors, and even college students have already pledged support for the group's electoral bid.

Major hairdressing associations such as Filhair (Filipino Hairdressers Cooperative Association of the Philippines), Hacap (Hairdressers Cooperatives Association of the Philippines) and Hair Asia have signified their willingness to participate in the campaign.

Each organization has

between 20,000 and 30,000 members who own beauty parlors all over the country.

Queer eye for straight Congress

From page A1

The country's LGBT—whom Remoto estimated to number about 8 million—were not about to miss another chance to bring the concerns of a "marginalized sector" into the halls of Congress.

In the absence of current figures and citing a study by sociologist Margaret Mead in the 1950s that estimated gay people to make up 10 percent of a country's population, Remoto said 10 percent of the Philippine population of 82.7 million was about 8 million LGBT.

Even if only half of the estimated LGBT population would vote, then its party-list group would have a potential voter base of 4.35 million. Remoto said Ang Ladlad was aiming for at least 850,000 votes in the 2007 elections.

Long battle

"It's like a long battle. We have been preparing since 2003 .. It will be good if the people will give us a chance," he said. "The numbers are there, but you have to reach them. That's why we're asking around in the provinces."

Ang Ladlad had planned to launch its party-list bid in 2004. But the deadline to register was changed from January 2004 to October 2003 and the group failed to sign up the party on time.

This time though, Remoto's group is doing its homework early. They've already decided on a color motif—hot pink. They're eyeing beauty parlors as possible headquarters in every region or province.

Ang Ladlad is also checking out the demographics (information about the number and characteristics) of LGBT people, deploying members to northern Luzon, southern and central Mindanao.

Politicians, hairdressers

Politicians, including a senatorial candidate and local candidates in Luzon and Mindanao, have agreed to carry Ang Ladlad in their campaign programs and materials, Remoto said.

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Not all gay men want to become hairdressers, and not all lesbians want to become bus conductors or security guards," Remoto said.

The Philippines is a leading advocate of LGBT issues in Asia. LGBT groups have also actively pushed for the Anti-Discrimination Bill in Congress. Pride parades all over the world are traditionally held in June. In the Philippines, pride parades started in 1994, but in 2003, they were moved to December to coincide with Human Rights Day which is observed on Dec. 10.

Remoto said: "We are serious about this, but we are not traditional politicians who will cheat for a seat in government. Kung lose, eh di lose, try na lang uli sa 2010. Pero kung win, eh di winner. If we lose, we lose. We'll try again in 2010. But if we win we're winners."

PHILIPS

Wave of protests marks third anniversary of Iraq invasion

From page A1

pers' demand for the early withdrawal of its small peacekeeping contingent—a decision strongly criticized by Washington and other allies, but applauded at home.

A second Filipino worker abducted by Iraqi militants was freed in June last year after almost eight months in captivity.

The Iraq Solidarity Campaign also opposed the presence of US troops in the southern region of Mindanao, where they have been providing training and noncombat assistance to Filipino troops. The group criticized President Macapagal-Arroyo for allowing the Americans to intervene in domestic problems.

The primary target of US military assistance in the south is the Abu Sayyaf, a small but brutal al-Qaeda-linked group on Washington's list of terrorist groups. The Abu Sayyaf has been blamed for deadly bomb attacks, acts of banditry and kidnappings for ransom, including of Americans.

2nd day of demos

In Tokyo, about 800 demonstrators took to the streets for the second day, after some 2,000 protested Saturday.

"The Iraq war was President Bush's big mistake and the whole world is against him," said Ayako Nishimura, 66, who is a city council member from the Tokyo suburb of Sagamihara and organized Sunday's protest. "Iraq must decide its own affairs."

In Malaysia's largest city, Kuala Lumpur, about 600 people protested peacefully on Sunday—unlike a gathering last year in which police used a water cannon to disperse demonstrators.

About 150 policemen stood by as protesters from rights groups and opposition parties chanted, "Stop the War," "No Blood for Oil" and "America Get Out of Iraq."

In the Asia-Pacific region, a variety of factors appeared to distract people from issue. In the southern Australian city of Melbourne, which saw some of Australia's biggest antirwar protests three years ago, attention has been diverted by the Commonwealth Games, while in Thailand thousands of people have been embroiled in protests against embattled Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

In South Korea, it was a baseball match.

At least 1,000 activists rallied in Seoul on Sunday to condemn the US-led invasion of Iraq and to urge the government to bring their troops home.

"Withdraw the Zaytua unit," the activists shouted, referring to the code name of the South Korean troops stationed in northern Iraq. South Korea has been sending its own troops in Iraq after the United States and Britain.

The antirwar demonstration was a stark contrast to a crowd of some 10,000 baseball fans who turned out in a street rally a few blocks away to cheer and watch their national team on an outdoor screen as it played archriva, Japan, in a semi final match of the inaugural World Baseball Classic in San Diego.

Rumsfeld defense

US Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld answered critics of the war in a guest column in Sunday's Washington Post newspaper, asserting that if Americans were to turn away from Iraq now, it would be "the modern equivalent of handing postwar Germany back to the Nazis."

Protesters in Chicago marched down Michigan Avenue to a Saturday night rally at Daley Plaza downtown. Police estimated that more than 7,000 people took part.

"I'm against this war. I'm against the torture," said protester Martha Conrad, 54, of Chicago. "We're doing this for the people of Iraq."

In Pakistan, hundreds of people held antirwar rallies in several cities on Saturday, chanting slogans such as "Down with America!"

In London, police said a march from Parliament to a rally in Trafalgar Square on Saturday drew about 15,000 people, far fewer than the 100,000 that organizers had expected.

The numbers joining war protests across Europe were dwarfed by the half million people who demonstrated in France against proposed labor law reforms, and about 80,000 nationalists who rallied in Belgrade to mourn accused war criminal and former Balkan强人 Slobodan Milosevic, who died a week ago in his cell at a UN war crimes court in the Netherlands.

Speakers in London demanded coalition forces be withdrawn from Iraq, warning that the fighting could spread to neighboring Iran because of the international standoff over Tehran's nuclear program.

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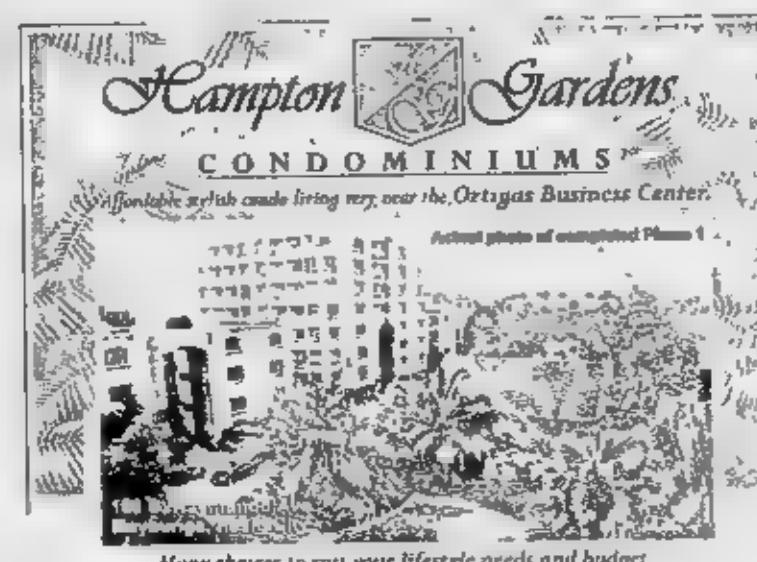
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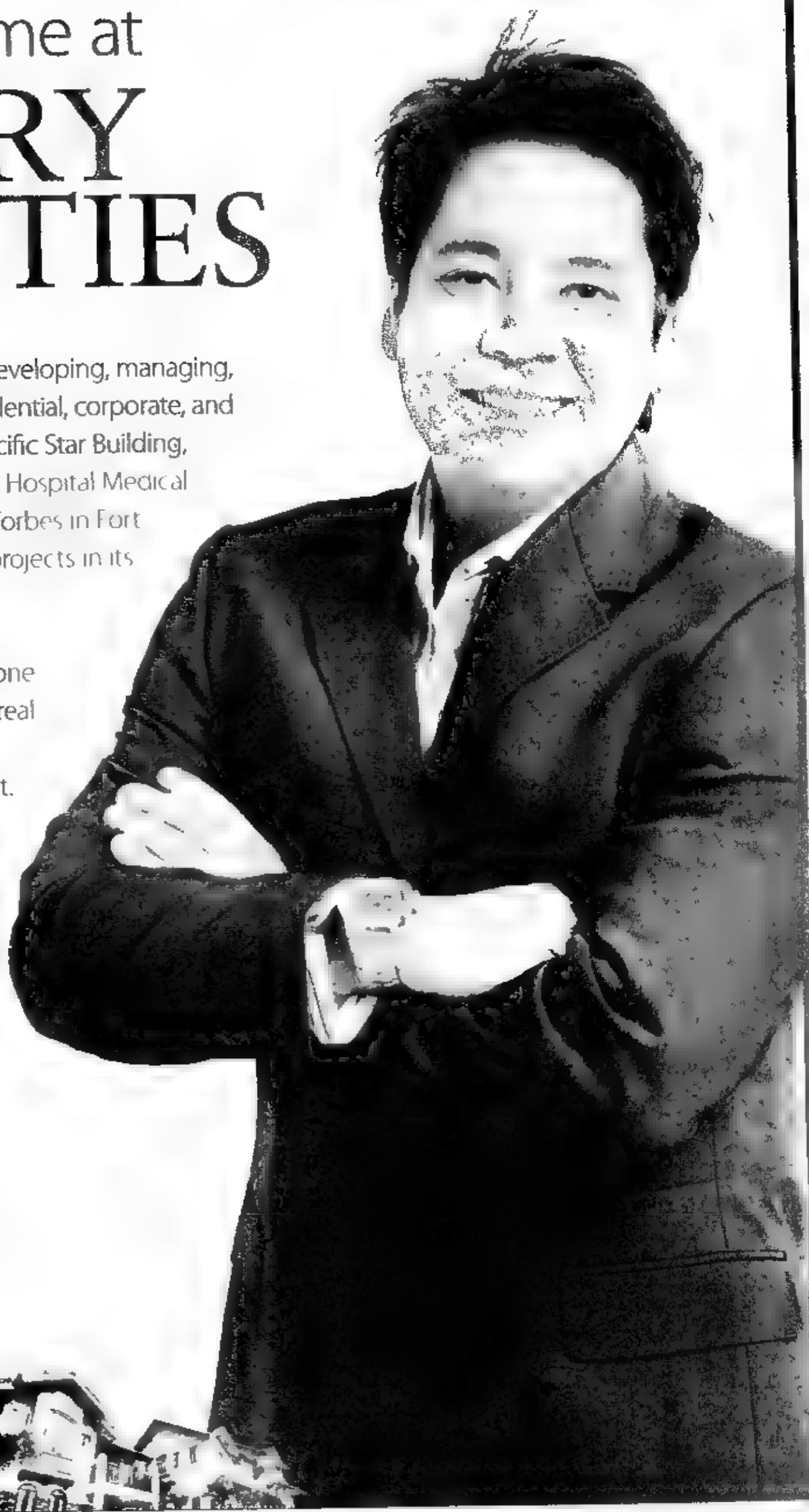
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Man wounded in Umale shooting dies in hospital

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE ELECTRICIAN WHO WAS ALSO SHOT on Thursday when he rushed to help businessman Leonardo Umale passed away after fighting for his life for three days.

Ernesto Ganton died on Saturday night at The Medical City in Pasig City because of a gunshot wound in his belly. He had undergone surgery for his injury a day before.

Ganton was with Umale when four men armed with 45 caliber handguns shot the businessman four times in the head while they

were about to enter the Pearl Plaza Building on Peari Drive.

Ganton had rushed to Umale's side and was shot in the process.

"The Umale family feels sad. He was a very loyal employee who had worked for Mr. Umale for a very long time," the Umale's lawyer, Hans Santos, told the INQUIRER.

Ganton worked as an electrician in the Pearl Plaza Building which was owned by the businessman.

Santos said the Umale family had already expressed willingness to let Ganton's family

stay with them.

Umale's ashes, placed inside an urn, were sealed inside a crypt yesterday afternoon at the Christ the King Church in Greenmeadows, Quezon City.

Asked if investigators had already uncovered any significant development in the case, Eastern Police District director Chief Supt. Charlene Alejandro said: "Wala pa (None yet)."

The Umale family has offered a P10-million reward to anyone who could provide information on the four gunmen and the mastermind behind the killing.

WHAT'S INSIDE



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■ **MMDA: More pedestrians killed last year**

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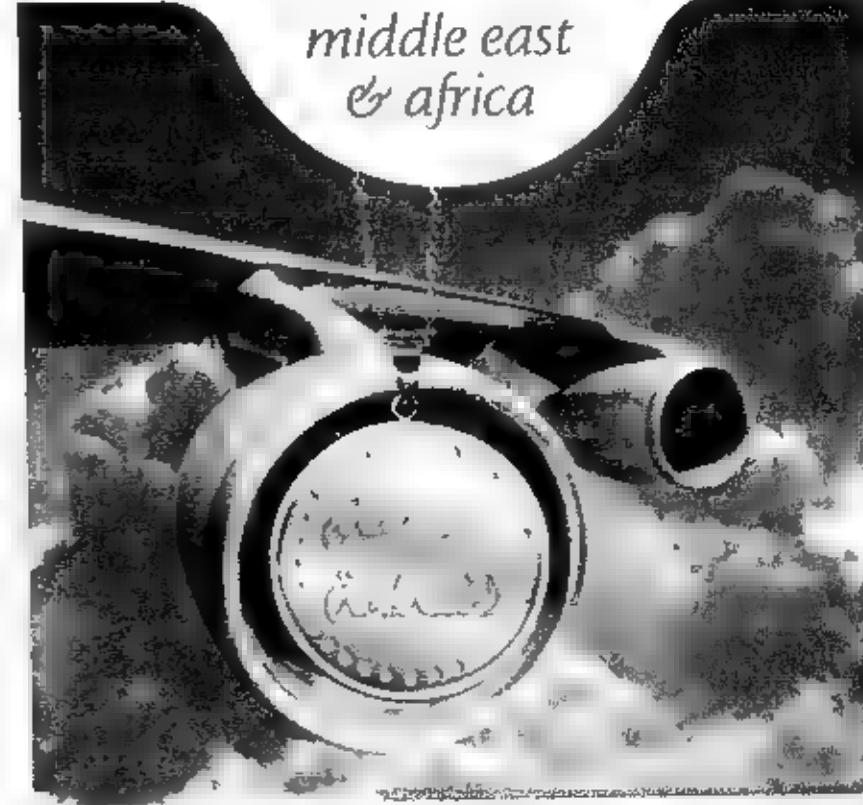
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More pedestrians killed last year

By Tarra V. Quismundo

FOR THE THIRD CONSECUTIVE YEAR, MOST of the people killed in road accidents in the metropolis were pedestrians, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) said yesterday.

An accident analysis report of the agency's Road Safety Unit (RSU) showed that of the 355 fatalities in 2005, 180 were pedestrians who were killed while crossing the road, 116 others were drivers while 59 were passengers.

Most of the fatal accidents also happened at night, between 4 p.m. and 6 a.m.

In 2004, 142 or more than half of the 281 persons who died in road accidents were pedestrians. The same trend was observed from June 2002 to November 2003 with 233 out of 359 fatalities also pedestrians.

"The relatively high proportion of pedestrians killed... is still a cause for concern," the RSU said in its report this year.

"There are still lots of commuters who cross the roads indiscriminately, even if they could see signs warning them against doing so... There are even people who would cut through the steel fences we had put up on the sidewalks and center islands just to cross

where it's risky. It's really surprising what they do," MMDA General Manager Robert Nacianceno said.

The MMDA said that this was why they had put up pink signs on the road with the warning: "Huwag tumawid, nakamamatay" (Crossing the road could kill you.)

"Maybe some people think the government just suddenly thought of putting up those signs without much thinking, so they think they don't mean anything, that they are not worth following. But we put up those signs after a thorough study and for their own safety," Nacianceno said.

He added that aside from crossing the road, the speedy flow of traffic along roads that had been widened may also be another factor leading to fatalities among pedestrians. Other causes: Crowded sidewalks which force pedestrians to walk on the road and undisciplined drivers who do not slow down as they approach pedestrian lanes.

Although last year's fatalities amounted to a 26 percent rise in accident-related deaths, the RSU said that the increase was mainly due to its boosted data gathering capacity, as its wider-reaching system of collating accident reports in the metropolis was initiated just last year.



DIVE INTO SUMMER

As the temperature soars with the onset of summer, residents in Navotas cool down by swimming in Manila Bay, just a few meters away from the town's newly-opened centennial park.

RANDY HORNILLOSA

QC reaches out to landslide victims

By DJ Yap

TO REPLACE A SYMBOL OF GRIEF with one of healing, the people of Quezon City have presented Barangay Guinsaugon in St. Bernard town of Southern Leyte with a most welcome gift: A new school building.

The old Guinsaugon Elementary School was buried in the Feb. 17 landslide that nearly erased the barangay from the map, leaving scores dead and missing, and thousands homeless.

To some, the school represented the depth of the tragedy that had struck the area, as Filipinos were struck hard by the image of 200 schoolchildren and teachers buried alive in a sea of mud, rock and soil.

Rescue efforts were centered on locating the school in the hope of finding survivors. But in the end, rescuers lost the battle against time and the elements, and the buried school was consigned to its fate.

In the aftermath of the tragedy,

Quezon City, one of the richest cities in the country, has extended a hand to help residents in the small barangay pick up the pieces and start anew.

For Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr., healing and recovery can begin once a new school has been built to replace the old one.

The Quezon City government turned over an initial amount of P5.3 million to Southern Leyte for the construction of a new school building in the barangay.

"The amount may not be enough but it manifests our deepest sympathies and brotherly condolences to the Southern Leyte victims," Belmonte said during the turnover ceremony at Quezon City Hall Bulwagan last week.

Southern Leyte Gov. Rosette Lleras personally received the amount during the turnover ceremony.

Belmonte and Lleras also signed a memorandum of agreement on the construction of the school building.

Under the agreement, a donation amounting to P6 million will be used to build a two-story school building with 12 classrooms that stand to benefit 200 pupils.

The school shall be constructed in an area that has been declared safe by disaster management authorities to prevent a repeat of the tragedy, according to the agreement.

The City Council earlier approved a resolution allocating P5 million for the relief and rehabilitation of the landslide victims.

Belmonte, on the other hand, collected an additional P1 million through a fund-raising program at City Hall.

The P700,000 balance will be given once the project is nearing completion.

Belmonte said building a new school to replace the old one is both timely and vital as the people of Barangay Guinsaugon, especially its schoolchildren, take the first few steps on the path to recovery.



WORKERS at the 168 Shopping Mall in Divisoria wait for the establishment to open, days after customs operatives conducted a raid.

REN ZAMORA

Business groups laud 168 raid

By Leila B. Salaverria

SEVERAL BUSINESS GROUPS YES- terday lauded the Bureau of Customs' recent raid on the 168 Shopping Mall in Manila, with a trader calling the operation an encouraging sign in the fight against smuggling.

One of the groups, the Fair Trade Alliance (FTA), even offered to provide the BOC with lawyers to help prosecute individuals and companies that violate customs laws.

FTA executive director Rene Ofre- neo said that with the raid, local industries have gained confidence in the government's antismuggling program.

"The signs are encouraging. Maybe this is now the real thing we have long been waiting for," FTA lead con- venor Wigberto Tanada said in a statement.

During the raid conducted last Thursday, over 500 customs personnel seized the goods of stall owners who failed to prove that they had paid taxes for imported items being sold in their store.

Other groups which supported the BOC raid were the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), the Employers Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP), the Philippine Exporters Confederation (Philexport) and the Federation of Filipino Chinese Chamber of Commerce Inc. (FCCCI).

Next step

"Hopefully, the next step is that we see big-time smugglers sent to jail and erring retailers of 168 mall being charged and prosecuted immediately. I hope BOC will not let up in its anti-smuggling drive," said PCCI presi-

dent Donald Dee.

FCCCI president Francis Chua also commended Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales for his "tenacity."

"For the first time, we have a customs commissioner who is not afraid of big-time smuggling syndicates," he said.

Chua also lauded the recent arrest of suspected smuggler Samuel Lee by the police. Lee, whom the police had described as a known plastic resin smuggler, has been charged with violating the country's tariff and customs code.

The BOC said the government could collect an estimated P700 million in taxes, duties and penalties following the raid on the mall.

The mall has around 800 tenants selling various items like shoes, clothes, toys and school and office supplies.

P75,000 worth of shabu seized in Pasay

AGENTS OF THE PHILIPPINE DRUG Enforcement Agency (PDEA) yesterday raided three houses in a crowded residential area in Pasay City, where they seized around P75,000 worth of suspected shabu.

Two persons identified as Paking Bonos and Roberto Quijano were arrested during the three-hour operation on Tramo Street in Barangay 46, Zone 6. Authorities said they were looking for a third suspect identified as Archie Navarrete, who was not around during the raid.

"We received reports that the sale of shabu is rampant in the area. The place is crowded, there are many people, and it's conducive to drugs," Senior Supt. Abe Lemos of PDEA's Metro Manila Regional Office said in a phone interview.

Seized from the three suspects' houses were 61 sachets which contained 25 grams of suspected shabu estimated to be worth P75,000. A small vault containing around P500,000 in cash was also taken from Navarrete's house as the money, according to

Lemos, may have come from drug pushing.

Lemos said the PDEA would file charges of drug pushing and possession against the three suspects.

"At least they would know that there is no letup in our antidrug operations," he told the INQUIRER.

Lemos added that 15 other persons who were inside the three houses at the time of the operation, including the suspects' relatives and friends, would be placed under investigation and tested for drug use.

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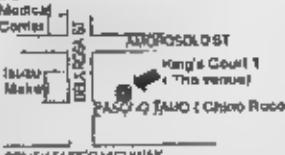
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WORLD BRIEFS

Americans want Democrats in Congress

WASHINGTON—Most Americans want Democrats to take control of Congress in November mid-term elections, while 34 percent prefer a Republican Congress, a *Newsweek* poll said Saturday. President George W. Bush's approval rating hit its lowest score in the *Newsweek* poll, the news-magazine said in a statement, citing recent events, such as the Dubai ports controversy and the upcoming third anniversary of the Iraq war. Only 36 percent of American adults approve of the way the president is handling his job, according to results of the survey conducted on Thursday and Friday. Sixty-four percent are dissatisfied with the way things are going in the United States at this time, while only 30 percent are satisfied.

AFP

Steaming website

ANCHORAGE, Alaska—Want to peer into the steaming summit of an erupting volcano without risking death? Anyone with an Internet connection and a computer can do just that, thanks to about 30 cameras and other recording devices set up on Alaska's Augustine Volcano that are streaming information to a website hosted by the Alaska Volcano Observatory, a joint federal-state office. The site <http://www.avo.alaska.edu/activity/Augustine.php> has received over 253 million hits since the start of the year, becoming a popular destination for everyone from scientists to amateur volcano buffs who want to keep tabs on the restive 1,260-meter volcano. "The Web has really revolutionized information dissemination and consequently the level of interest and knowledge of the public," said Shan de Silva, a volcanologist and professor at the University of North Dakota.

Reuters

Iran frees most prominent dissident

TEHRAN—Iran's most prominent political prisoner, dissident Akbar Ganji, was released late Friday night after six years in prison. Visibly thinner and sporting a bushy beard, Ganji smiled and greeted family and friends Saturday but refused to make any comments. "He has decided not to talk due to his physical condition. He should not get tired," Molai expiated. Ganji, 46, was sentenced to six years in prison in 2001 after he wrote articles implicating several regime officials in a string of gruesome murders of opposition intellectuals and writers in 1998—crimes that shocked Iran. He did not give names, and instead kept readers guessing over the identity of the "Master Key" and the "Gray Eminence"—but the nicknames were widely interpreted as referring to former President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and former Intelligence Minister Ali Fallahian.

AFP

Parkinson's drug linked to gambling

WASHINGTON—Medical researchers are investigating suspicions that drugs prescribed to treat Parkinson's disease could turn patients into compulsive gamblers, the Washington Post reported on Sunday. Scientists at the Food and Drug Administration have found a strong association between pathological gambling and the drugs, which boost the level of dopamine in the brain, according to the newspaper. Dopamine, a chemical naturally produced in the human body, plays a key role in the way the brain controls movements. A shortage of dopamine causes Parkinson's disease. But the chemical is also associated with addictive behaviors such as drug use and pleasurable experiences such as sex and food. Researchers, according to the Washington Post, are looking into the possibility that drugs for treating Parkinson's are turning "some patients into obsessive pleasure seekers."

AFP

GANJI

REUTERS

PARIS—CALM RETURNED TO

PARIS early Sunday after riot police

tear-gassed scores of demon-

strators in the wake of a demon-

stration by an estimated million

people who took to the streets of

France to protest a widely unpopu-

lar new labor law.

Hundreds of young demon-

strators defied police following a

peaceful march through Paris

which attracted up to 350,000

people, hurling objects at officers

who eventually drove them back,

charging the crowd and using

tear gas grenades.

Vehicles were set on fire and

overturned, and nearby windows

smashed. There were 166 arrests,

while seven policemen and 17

demonstrators were injured in

the unrest at the eastern Place de

la Nation that lasted for six hours,

police said.

About 500 students then

marched on Paris' Sorbonne university in the Latin Quarter, the

scene of earlier clashes.

Chanting "Liberate the Sor-

bonne!" the students charged and

removed some barriers erected

by police to block access to the

university, and threw a Molotov

cocktail at a riot police van, but a

fire was quickly extinguished.

Police drove back the students

with water cannon, and then de-

ployed in front of the remaining

barriers to prevent their advance.

In the Mediterranean port of

Marseille hundreds of militants

demonstrated, some trying to set

fire to the entrance to the town hall

before police drove them back.

One officer was injured and six

youths were arrested, police said.

There were also clashes in the

northern city of Lille with police

responding with tear gas, as well

as Grenoble in the east and Cler-

mont-Ferrand in the center.

Unions said 1.5 million

demonstrators took part in more

than 150 rallies across the

country against the center-right gov-

ernment's First Employment Con-

tract (CPE)—drawing students,

workers, pensioners and families.

The interior ministry put the

overall turnout at just over

500,000, but unions urged Prime

Minister Dominique de Villepin to

heed the message from the street.

The CPE, a contract for under 26-

year-olds that can be terminated in

the first two years without explana-

tion, is supposed to encourage em-

ployers to take on young staff.

Drawn up in the wake of riots

last year in high-immigration

city suburbs—where youth un-

employment can be as high as 50

percent—the CPE was approved

by parliament last week as part of

a wider equal opportunities law.

But the opposition says the CPE

is a step back from hard-won labor

rights, and will make it more diffi-

cult than ever for young people to

find long-term employment.

"The demand for withdrawal

of the CPE is gathering ever

greater force. Seventy percent of

the French want it withdrawn,

and 80 percent of young people.

The government is in a dead-

end," said Bernard Thibault of the

CGT union.

"Today we can clearly see that

the mobilization is stronger than

ever. Either the government lis-

tens to reason and withdraws the

CPE, or it will be obliged to do so

next week—because we will be

back in the street," said Bruno

Juillard of the UNEF students'

union.



YOUNG protesters during a demonstration in Lille, northern France, March 18.

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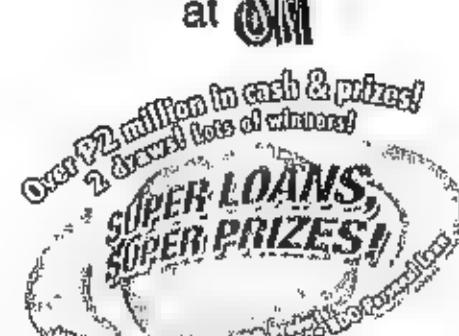
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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Egypt suffers first death from bird flu

CAIRO—A 30-YEAR-OLD EGYPTIAN woman has died of bird flu, becoming the country's first human victim of the virus,

the health ministry said on Saturday. It said the woman from Qaloubiyah province, about 40 km north of Cairo,

where the highly pathogenic H5N1 strain has been detected in poultry, was taken ill on Wednesday.

"They (doctors) took samples for analysis at the Ministry of Health laboratories. They confirmed she was in-

fected with bird flu. She died on Friday morning," a ministry statement said, adding the woman had been given Tamiflu, a drug used to treat suspected cases of bird flu.

Israel said on Saturday that four poultry workers suspected of having bird flu had tested negative for the virus, after the country detected its first cases of H5N1 in birds on Friday.

Bird flu has spread across Europe, Africa and parts of Asia and killed at least 98 people worldwide since 2003.

Although hard to catch, people can contract bird flu after coming into contact with infected birds. Scientists fear the virus could mutate into a form that could pass easily between humans, triggering a pandemic in which millions could die.

The World Health Organization (WHO) confirmed that Egypt had reported its first human case of bird flu.

Dr. Hassan a-Bushra, WHO's regional adviser for communicable diseases surveillance, said the H5N1 bird flu virus had been found in a blood sample taken from the woman, and that other samples were being tested for further confirmation.

Egypt reported its first cases of bird flu in poultry flocks last month. Media and state reports say H5N1 has now been detected in at least 17 of Egypt's 26 governorates and the city of Luxor.

Egyptian farmers say the poultry market—worth about 17 billion Egyptian pounds (\$3 billion) and supporting up to 3 million people—has been devastated.

Israeli workers culled thousands of turkeys and chickens but authorities said further tests were needed to confirm whether an outbreak on two farms was of the deadly H5N1 strain of bird flu.

The health ministry said four people who had been suspected of having bird flu had tested negative.

Israeli officials said poultry in the infected areas and their surroundings would be culled and the carcasses buried in underground pits.

In a rare act of cooperation, Israel was also testing dead fowl found in the West Bank and Gaza on behalf of the Palestinian Authority.

Reuters



On April 2, 2006, Enchanted Kingdom will open at 12 noon instead of the usual 10 am. But the magic will go on until midnight.

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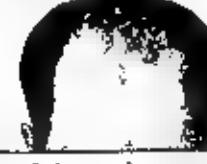
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SPORTS

Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres

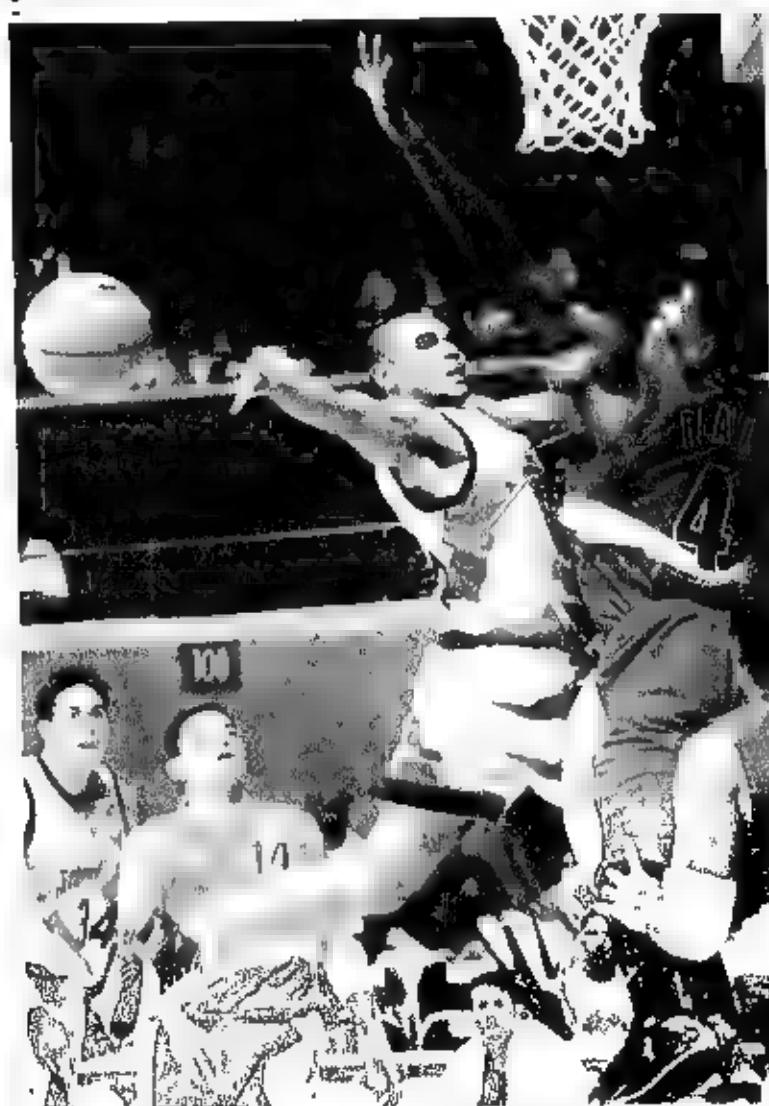
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A DRIVING Brandon Cablay of San Miguel Beer opts to make a pass as Rafi Reavis of Coca Cola applies pressure.

ERIK ARAZAS

Tense Tigers survive Beermen's late surge

By Musong R. Castillo

COCA-COLA HAS BEEN ON EDGE RECENTLY, but the results have been the same and the Tigers are continuing to surprise the Gran Matador Brandy-PBA Philippine Cup field.

The Tigers won for the fourth straight time last night, thanks in part to two freakish San Miguel blunders in the end game of a 75-72 decision that kept Coke in the elimination round lead.

The Tigers almost blew a 16-point lead and had to scramble in the final minutes to eke out the win in the game that featured the tournament's two hottest clubs at the Araneta Coliseum.

"We got lucky again," Coke coach Binky Ravis said.

In the second game, Alaska got its

second win in four outings with a 99-84 rout of Air21, which dropped to 1-3.

John Arigo hit two charities with 11.5 ticks left off a Brandon Cablay foul before the

Beermen threw away the chance to forge extension with sloppy ball handling at the other end.

It was the second straight close shave for the Tigers, counting their 80-72 victory over Purefoods last week. The past two victories have been a far departure to the first two, where the Tigers blew away their foes by a combined 16.5 points.

The scores:

COCA-COLA 75—Arigo 16, Singon 13, Antonio 10, Mamaril 9, Peak 9, Reavis 7, Abanitos 6, Walwright 4, Miranda 2, Morano 0.

SAN MIGUEL 72—Ildefonso 20, Selig 16, Racela 10, Pena 10, Noble 8, Adriano 4, Cuquio 3, Montverde 3, Kong 0, Cablay 0. Quarters: 20-all, 38-36, 56-51, 75-72.

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Photo by ERICK ARAZAS

SPORTS

Lina sticks to his guns on Fiba suspension

By Jasmine W. Payo

BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION OF THE Philippines (BAP) president Joey Lina reiterated his belief yesterday that the international basketball federation (Fiba) will not lift the suspension on the country even with a new basketball federation already created.

"Forming a new body while [the] BAP remains Fiba's member in good standing will not achieve the goal of lifting Fiba's suspension," said Lina, who lamented that people were trying to discredit him.

"It seems that I'm being unreasonable because I'm not joining their group," he said.

Swimming president Mark Joseph, who



LINA

heads the Philippine Olympic Committee basketball task force, said his group has no plans to woo Lina just to be able to fully satisfy the requirements set forth by the Fiba for the lifting of the country's suspension from international meets.

"Mr. Lina's refusal to cooperate will not change anything," said Joseph.

"My opinion (last Saturday) urging Mr. Lina to reconsider his decision to break fellowship with the major stakeholders for

the sake of unity in basketball, was mine alone. I do not pressure to speak for the POC at all," he further clarified.

Lina has accused the POC and its task force of keeping him away from unification talks. He added that "without even conferring" with him, the POC and the other stakeholders decided to form Philippines Basketball to replace the BAP.

"Mr. Lina's accusation that the POC has not been honest and transparent is uncalled for," said Joseph.

Joseph stressed that the group is simply abiding by the memorandum of understanding between the Fiba and the POC that tasked the five stakeholders to form a new basketball federation in the country.

Lina insisted that the best way to lift the Fiba suspension is to incorporate the major stakeholders into a restructured BAP. The POC and the stakeholders, he added, already agreed upon this process after four meetings. But another process—the formation of a new federation—was "abruptly agreed upon" during the fifth meeting, which Lina failed to attend.

Backed by the PBA, PBL, UAAP and the NCAA, the structure of Pilipinas Basketball will be presented by POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco to Fiba secretary general Patrick Baumann for approval this month.

Unless the suspension is lifted, the country cannot compete in all international events, including the Asian Games this December.

MONDAY, MARCH 20, 2006

Much-awaited showdown

CLEAN LIVING



Manolo R. Itigo

NO DOUBT ABOUT it, the legions of racing fans are looking forward to a rematch between two of the country's outstanding gallopers, Real Spicy and Speed Advantage. Both horses have met previously and scored a victory over each other, thus making their return meeting a most keenly awaited clash.

On record, Real Spicy has had a more fruitful and active schedule this year compared with Speed Advantage. Owned by sports patron Hermie Esguerra, Real Spicy recently made a rousing debut as a four-year-old by winning the 2006 Philracom Commissioner's Cup at the Santa Ana Park on March 12. "He (Real Spicy) is really in top condition," said the proud owner from Pandan, Bulacan.

Undefeated in four consecutive races this year, Real Spicy is a handsome island-born chestnut colt by Real Quiet, a two-leg winner of the US Triple Crown, out of Spicy Tale. He is being honed for two more races before the staging of this year's Silver Cup on May 14, eyeing another major stakes race victory over an expected banner field which includes arch rival Speed Advantage.

Flying the colors of the Bobby Yutadco Stable, Speed Advantage is a four-year-old bay colt by Royal Premier out of Trudy Capone (US). He is bred by real estate executive Toti Carino.

Both horses are noted speedsters, but many say their most remarkable triumphs were registered when they were backed by stablemates.

WHO RUNS DANCE SPORT IN RP?

Former congressman and now POC president Jose Cojuangco Jr. clarified recently that the Philippine Professional Dance Sport Association under the leadership of Stanley or Stan Alexander, an Australian, is not authorized by the POC to conduct any training and promote dance sport in the Philippines.

But how on earth could the Department of Education and the Commission for Higher Education ignore this POC ruling by allowing Alexander's group to provide full technical support and guidance to the DepEd andCHED? What on earth is wrong with these people?

The rule is crystal clear: The Dance Sport Council of the Philippines is the national sport association in the country that is accredited by the POC and the Philippine Sports Commission. The DSCP as an NSA under Republic Act 6847, has the exclusive technical control over the promotion and development of dance sport in the Philippines.

In her letter to Dr. Fe Hidago, DepEd officer-in-charge, and Carlito Puno, CHED chair, DSCP president Becky Garcia said, "Our organization is the recognized NSA for dance sport pursuant to Section 3 of RA 6847, an act creating and establishing the Philippine Sports Commission, defining its powers, functions and responsibilities, appropriating funds therefore, and for other purposes."

The Dance Sport Council of the Philippines has the exclusive technical control over the promotion and development of dance sport in the Philippines. We just successfully hosted the 23rd Southeast Asian Games in Cebu where dance sport was included for the first time and won the first two gold medals and two silver medals for the Philippines and our council proud.

"Mr. Alexander and his group are not authorized to provide technical support and guidance to the Department of Education for the inclusion of dance sport in the 2006 Palarong Pambansa as well as to implement dance sport in the school curriculum. Thus, we seek your cooperation and assistance through the nullification of any existing agreements with Stan or Stanley Alexander."

The DSCP also said it was endorsing instead the Professional Dance Teachers Association of the Philippines headed by lawyer Ma. Cecilia Kaigbak, "as the authorized training arm of the DSCP to undertake the technical support and guidance to the education department and the Commission for Higher Education and all other government agencies."

And while on the subject of dance sport, I would like to doff my hat to the winners of the recent First Quarter Ranking and Competitions led by TV host and actress Regine Tolentino, who topped the Grade 8 Latin category with partner Greg Dimarucut.

The other winners were Emmanuel Reyes-Maria Rosete, John Erolle Melencio-Dearlie Gerodina, Mark Leonel Perez-Yoshiko Moroyama, Crisanta Parado-Jocelyn Macopia, Gemini Sangual-Susan Medalle, Manolito Mendoza-Arnalyn Viray, Arthur Eroles-Jenevieve Camacho, Benny Lao-Merlyn del Mundo, Crisaldo Rendon-Eleanor Hayco, Wilfred Glenn Sto. Domingo-Gilda Lum, PSA awardees Reynato Rener Mercado-Judith Anne Melencio, Roan Jett Fernandez-Joninalyn Gemiciano, Jumil Bascalso-Virganie Oyao, Jefferson Pimentel-Diane Xylene Balili and Virginio Legarde-Divina Lamosa.



WILLIE Miller gets his game—and the Phone Pals—going

Miller, Alapag get monkey off TNT's back

By June Navarro

HONG KONG—WILLIE MILLER AND JIMMY Alapag found their touch from the outside and Talk 'N Text finally got its signals right, torching Purefoods, 88-66, Sunday in the Purefoods Chunkee in the Gran Matador Brandy-PBA Philippine Cup.

Defying the chill at the Queen Elizabeth Stadium here, Alapag and Miller combined for seven triples that triggered a breakaway and finally pull the Phone Pals out of a 0-2 hole.

"We just wanted to get the monkey off our backs," said Talk 'N Text coach Derrick Pumaren after the Phone Pals survived a third-quarter scare from Kerby Raymundo before wildly cheering overseas Filipino workers here.

Miller finished with 28 points, including four straight treys at one stretch.

Raymundo led a furious rally that pulled Purefoods within eight, 52-64, before Alapag drained two crushing three-pointers that eventually sent the Giants to their second defeat in three games.

"We gave the crowd a really good game and

showed what Talk 'N Text can do," said Pumaren, who scored his first victory as Phone Pals head coach. "This is a treat for the OFWs here."

Tickets already sold out a few days back but for some reason, the gallery section of the 3,000-seat arena wasn't filled to the brim.

The Giants opened the game as cold as the frosty air-conditioning system of the stadium, missing their first five attempts from the field and watching shooter James Yap uncharacteristically miss five straight free throws.

The Talk 'N Text lead ballooned to 80-55 following Alapag's treys.

Philippine consul general Rufino Vicente was present during the ceremonial toss for the game, only the PBA's second overseas match in history.

The scores:

TALK 'N TEXT 88—Miller 28, Carey 14, Alapag 11, Tactava 10, Cardona 8, Avenido 7, Pablo 5, Ferrido 5, Villoria 0, Menevez 0, Junio 0, Caronjosa 0.

PUREFOODS 66—Raymundo 24, Pingris 15, J. Yap 9, R. Yap 5, Urimpat 4, Aratid 3, Tejada 3, Evangelista 2, Castillo 1, Ellones 0, Yee 0, Gamboa 0.

Quarters: 30-18, 46-31, 54-52, 68-66

Iligan Crusaders trounce Cotabato Braves

ILIGAN CITY—PRE-SEASON FAVORITE ILIGAN LIVED up to its billing Saturday by whipping expansion team North Cotabato, 96-78, in the 2006 NBC national basketball championship at the packed MSU-IIT gym here.

The Firefly Lightings-backed Crusaders of Mayor Lawrence Cruz and team manager Freddie Siao led from start to finish, but they needed a league-record 36-point quarter in the payoff period to turn the game into a rout.

Former UST Tiger Derrick Hubaldo and ex-Laguna playmaker Marlon Kalaw combined for 13 points to spark that record bunge in the last 10 minutes and hold off Gov

Mamay PBA's Braves, who rallied to within a basket, 58-60, behind the incursions of Michael Brata, Rex Ligue and Jeron Cabanog.

Kalaw won player of the game honors.

With their first victory, the Crusaders matched the 1-0 card of Valencia Golden Harvest, which nipped Pagadian in Friday's southern division opener in Pagadian City.

Spring Cooking Oil-Parawhique and Batang Tagaytay also carry 1-0 slates in the northern division of the tournament sponsored by Panasonic, Sulpicio Lines, Nature's Spring Mineral Water, Spring Cooking Oil, Regent Foods,

Firefly Lightings, Molten and Prime Channel.

"The boys were fun to watch on the court," said Iligan coach Jun Longalong. "They followed our game plan to the letter. The crowd's support was quite overwhelming."

NBC games are aired at 10 p.m. daily over Prime Channel.

ILIGAN 96—Kalaw 23, Huidala 21, Go 11, Niccio 9, Omping 8, Matias 7, Ayodela 6, Candy 4, Calerio 3, Sagad 2, Ganderosa 1.

NC 78—Erat 14, Ligue 12, Binas 10, Clar 9, Jawad 4, Reyes 4, Alido 2, Celdura 2, Del Monte 2, Dagatan 2.

Quarters: 24-15, 41-33, 60-53, 96-78

Kilimanjaro conquers Chairman's Cup field

By Musong R. Castillo

CARMONA, CAVITE—KILIMANJARO CAME up with a mammoth finishing kick under the superb handling of Patty Dilema last night to overpower the field in the P1 million 2006 Philracom Chairman's Cup at the San Lazaro Leisure Park here.

Sent off as the fourth choice, Kilimanjaro waited for the speedballs to tire before Dilema wheeled her into position rounding the far turn.

The three-year-old bay colt by Khoozam out of Peggy B rallied wide and picked off a fagged out Manila's Gem with ease to win by close to two lengths.

Juggernaut, last year's champion juvenile and tipped as the brightest hope to become the next Triple Crown champion, was scratched at the last minute. Reports said the undefeated filly had bone spurs in a front leg.

Manila's Gem, the speedster handled by Jessie B. Guia, labored the entire mile behind Million Dollar, who refused to yield the lead, and heavy favorite King's Dominion who cornered sales of 381,494 out of the total forecast pool of P1,171,328.

King's Dominion, another colt piloted by veteran Antonio B. Alcasid, actually grabbed the lead in the backstretch where Kilimanjaro lagged at the tail-end of the nine-horse pack, a good eight lengths behind.

But Dilema applied the whip and Kilimanjaro responded, zooming into contention in the final quarter en route to victory worth P600,000 for owner Michael Trilliana.

Kilimanjaro clocked 1:42 on quarters of 24.5, 24, 25.5, 28 over 1,600 meters.

Manila's Gem settled for the P225,000 runner-up purse, while the third-finishing Million Dollar won P125,000 and fourth placer King's Dominion took P50,000.

Sta. Elena Cup stakes P6M in prizes

THE 10TH EDITION OF THE STA. ELENA CUP member-guest invitational tournament will be held from March 30 to April 2 with prizes worth more than P6 million up for grabs.

A BMW 3-Series, a Toyota Camry and a Mazda 3, plus golf carts from Yamaha, all with a combined value of about P4 million, will be staked as hole-in-one prizes on holes to be designated by the multaward Sta. Elena Golf Club.

This will be apart from an exciting raffle package that includes Omega watches, an Alaska cruise for two inclusive of airfare, appliances and equipment, and cash prizes of P500,000 and P300,000.

Sponsors include Omega, Mizuno, Royal Caribbean, The Golf Shop of Batangas Travel, Sta. Elena Properties, Pepsi, Aviva and Intellicare. Hole-in-one sponsors are

Toyota Motor Philippines Inc., Prestige Cars Pasong Tamo, Mazda Greenhills, Kart Plaza Manufacturing and Club Car.

The event was booked in record time. A total of 226 two-player team slots were filled up in less than two days.

Practice rounds starting tomorrow will allow guests to familiarize themselves with the conditions of the course that has been consistently chosen as the country's best and among Asia's finest.

Venzen Paz and Bobby Iñigo are the defending net champions while Kevin Tayao and Raymund Sangil are returning to shoot for a repeat of their low gross victory last year.

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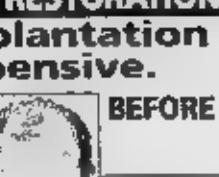
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ENTERTAINMENT

Text us your feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)



HIGH-CONCEPT, low-budget films: Sid Haig, Vic Diaz and Subas Herrero in "Big Bird Cage" (above); Diaz and Alona Alegre in "Black Mama" (right).



An A for RP-made B movies

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

IF YOU ASK UCLA PROFESSOR Michael Hawkins, Tony Falcon, Pinoy cowboys and women-in-prison flicks are worthy subjects for research and discourse.

In a recent lecture at the University of the Philippines Film Institute in Diliman, Hawkins presented his findings on what he called "women-in-prison" film genre.

To "exploit cheap but skilled labor and the exotic locale," B-movie producer Roger Cor-

man shot such potboilers here and hired Filipino artists for work both on and off cam in the early 1970s.

Hawkins is currently writing his Ph.D. dissertation on the subject for the University of California in Los Angeles

and has interviewed Corman and director Jack Hill, as well as Filipino producer Ciriaco H. Santiago and National Artist for Film Eddie Romero.

Romero is credited as executive producer on Hill's "The Big Doll House," released in 1971. That same year, another National Artist for Film, Gerardo de Leon, directed "Women in Cages" (locally known as "Play Pen"), which

ANA/A24

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2	V FOR VENDETTA	11:20, 2:25, 5:25, 8:20, 11:00 R-13
3	SHE'S THE MAN	12:25, 2:35, 6:35, 9:15, 10:30 PG-13
4	HOSTEL	1:45, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00 R-13

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2	HOSTEL	10:45, 12:45, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:15, 11:00 R-13
3	SHE'S THE MAN	10:45, 12:45, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:15, 11:00 PG-13
4	SHAGGY DOG	10:45, 12:45, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:15, 11:00 GP
5	V FOR VENDETTA	10:45, 12:45, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:15, 11:00 R-13

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MONDAY, MARCH 20, 2006

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08:50 LMF / 11:05 END

SHAGGY DOG

01:40 FS / 02:10 MF / 04:26

06:40 / 08:15 LFS

09:00 LMF / 10:45 END

SM MEGACINEMA

1 BREAKING NEWS

01:00 FS / 01:30 MF

07:00 / 08:30 LFS

09:00 LMF / 10:30 END

HOUSE OF FURY

V FOR VENDETTA

RENOVATION

THE DARK

FEARLESS

SHAGGY DOG

16 BLOCKS

FINAL DESTINATION 3

CASANOVA

CLOSE TO YOU

SM CITY NORTH EDSA

V FOR VENDETTA

FEARLESS

SHE'S THE MAN

RESERVED

SHAGGY DOG

HOUSE OF FURY

FINAL DESTINATION 3

16 BLOCKS

SM CITY DASMABINAS

V FOR VENDETTA

CASANOVA

BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE

AEON FLUX

SM CITY FAIRVIEW

BREAKING NEWS

THE DARK

CLOSE TO YOU

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FINAL DESTINATION 3

FEARLESS

V FOR VENDETTA

SHAGGY DOG

SHE'S THE MAN

BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE

UNDERCLASS MAN

HOUSE OF FURY

CLOSE TO YOU

HOUSE OF FURY

SM CITY STA. MESA

V FOR VENDETTA

SHAGGY DOG

16 BLOCKS

SHE'S THE MAN

FEARLESS

16 BLOCKS

THE DARK

FINAL DESTINATION 3

CASANOVA

CLOSE TO YOU

CASANOVA

SM CITY BICUTAN

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CASANOVA

THE DARK

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SM CITY SAN LAZARO

V FOR VENDETTA

FINAL DESTINATION 3

SHAGGY DOG

SHE'S THE MAN

FEARLESS

16 BLOCKS

CLOSE TO YOU

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SM CITY DASMABINAS

V FOR VENDETTA

CASANOVA

BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE

AEON FLUX

SM CITY MANILA

V FOR VENDETTA

THE DARK

CLOSE TO YOU

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BREAKING NEWS

HOUSE OF FURY

CLOSE TO YOU

HOUSE OF FURY

SM CITY FAIRVIEW

V FOR VENDETTA

SHAGGY DOG

16 BLOCKS

FEARLESS

SHAGGY DOG

MONDAY,
MARCH 20, 2006

ENTERTAINMENT

A2-5

Brownman mall tour

BROWMAN REVIVAL is currently touring Robinson's Malls to promote their new album, "Steady Lang," from BMG Records Pilipinas. First stop was Robinsons Place Metro East on March 3, followed by Santa Rosa on March 5, then Galleria on March 17. Forthcoming schedules include Robinsons Place Manila on March 30 and Novaliches on April 2. Shows start at 5 p.m.

Band

Explosion'

"Band Explosion" happens March 24, 8:30 p.m. at the Araneta Coliseum. Featured groups are Orange and Lemons, Cushe, Spengcole, Brownman Revival. Kitchie Nadal will also perform. Call 911-5555.

Tonight

Michaelangelo at Tavern on the Square
Suzy Unas at Manila Pavilion's Boulevard Lounge
Captiva at Metro Phi Bar, Metrowalk Complex

Tomorrow

Freeverse at Tavern on the Square
Eight Noteat RJ Guitar Bar
Aretha and Souled Out at Merk's
Troy Montero at Bagaberde Roxas Boulevard
U-Turn at Bagaberde Pasig
Margarita at Manila Pavilion's Boulevard Lounge
Minisix at Metro Phi Bar, Metrowalk Complex

March 22
Ntwin at Tavern on the Square
Moonstruck at RJ Guitar Bar

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LOVE IN DISGUISE

SHOW TIME

BROWMAN Revival

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Glory days and drama

YESTERDAY

IN 1960s

FROM glamour gal to golden grandma: "My goal is to be of service."

IT'S A LONG STORY," she cautions the listener, but proceeds to tell it, anyway. Gloria Sevilla, Queen of Cebuano cinema, is recounting the glory days, when Visayan films competed with Tagalog hits not only for audience adulation but for Famas trophies.

A Cebuano film, "Badis sa Kinabuhu (Destiny)," almost romped away with Famas Best Picture in 1970. In fact, Gloria won Best Actress for that movie, which she produced with first husband Mat Ranillo Jr. under their own MG Films.

That was the second of her three Famas statuettes. She won Best Supporting Actress for "Madugong Paghihigant" in 1963 and again Best Actress for "Gimungaw Ako (I Miss You)" in 1974.

More significantly, "Badis" was shown in the Berlin International Film Festival and "Gimungaw" in the Moscow International Film Festival—both in the non-competition category.

Gloria, who describes herself as an awkward and gangly teenager, has surely gone a long way from Cebu.

Meeting Mat

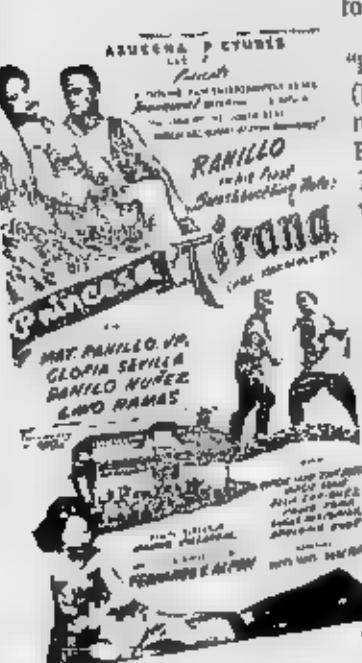
For good and ill, her sun-kissed and exotic looks helped her catch people's attention.

"I was so thin and dark, my classmates called me tiktik, after the bird," Gloria recalls. "But in one declamation contest that I won, Danilo Nufiez—talent scout, actor and my Papa's kum-pare—happened to be in the audience."

It was Danilo, a kontrabida in Cebuano flicks who later became Gloria's co-star in many movies (including "Badis"), who asked Bonifacio Sevilla, the 14-year-old's father, to allow her to join the movies.

For good measure, Danilo dragged along her future co-star and husband, Mat.

"I wanted it so bad that, before



MOVIES of Gloria's biggest hits in Cebu

THE CEBUANA charmer at age 14



Gloria Sevilla wasn't just the Queen of Cebuano cinema, she was also a pioneering producer who championed Visayan films

IN THE 1960s, with Mat Jr.

I faced them, I wore my mom's bra and stuffed it with rags because I was flat-chested," she chuckles. "Mat was my crush!"

Sufficiently motivated, Gloria bested 60 other aspirants in the audition and bagged the lead role opposite Mat in "Princesa Tirana," produced by Concordia Arong of Azucena Pictures.

A string of hits followed, like "Leonora," "Pailub Lang (Be Humble)" and "Gloria Akong Anak."

Before long, Manila beckoned.

One of the Santiago brothers (of *Premiere*) was in Cebu and noticed the long lines to one of Gloria's movies. Turned out, the theater checker was Gloria's father. Soon enough, before her dad could even finish asking her, 17-year-old Gloria was packing her bags for Manila.

Her first movie for *Premiere* was National Artist Gerry de Leon's "Banga ni Zimadar," top-billed by Efren Reyes, Johnny Montero, Edna Luna and Carol Varga.

"I was given so much importance in the billing," she beams. "I had one frame all to myself and it said: And introducing to the Tagalog audience, the Queen of Visayan movies, Gloria Sevilla!"

A year later, she was promoted to lead role in another De Leon masterpiece, "Ifugao"—which went down in history not only for giving Efren Reyes the Best Actor prize in the second Asian Film Festival in 1955, but also for showcasing the first frontal nude scene, with the dauntless Gloria, of course.

"But since I wasn't that busty, the film's makeup artist Tot Evangelista and Tony Artigan made prosthetic breasts for me," she remembers. "Every time they pulled the fake boobs off my chest, I cried out in pain. It was as if they used Mighty Bond!"

Gloria's work in *Premiere* and with Manong Gerry had undoubtedly taught her to put a premium on quality when she started producing her own movies.

Proof: Two Visayan films under her supervision were sent to Eu-



IN THE 1960s, with Mat Jr.

"Badis" was shown in the informative division in Berlin in 1970," she recounts. "The Philippine government dispatched a female consul as my chaperone and gave me P5,000 as clothing allowance."

Gloria brought three suitcases filled with *ternos*, Southern Philippine and other native costumes by designer Rudy Fuentes.

"We even brought *sampaguita* and Vanda orchids that were kept in a freezer on the plane," she recalls.

Showstopper

In Berlin, she was a showstopper. She made certain of this by arriving late on the opening night of "Badis" and making a grand entrance down a spiral staircase.

"The next day I landed on the front pages of German newspapers," she chuckles.

Two years later, she again made heads turn in Moscow, where "Gimungaw," directed by second husband Amado Cortez, was screened.

"At first, I wanted to walk out because the Philippine flag wasn't displayed," she says. Always a fighter, Gloria eventually convinced the organizers to show off the Philippine colors.

During the closing ceremony at the Kremlin, Gloria's *terno* and Amado's barong elicited admiring glances from fellow delegates—including Chilean First Lady Hortensia Bussi Soto, wife of Salvador Allende.

"She complimented my *terno* which was made of hablon and studded with crystals," Gloria reminisces. "She kept telling me that I was gorgeous. I guess it was her

first time to see someone ugly!"

True drama

Gloria's healthy sense of humor has saved her from the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune on more than one occasion. Her life was just as dramatic as the tearjerkers she starred in.

Mat died in a plane crash in 1969, making her a widow with five kids, and eight months pregnant at that.

In the 1980s, she migrated to the United States with second husband Amado and made ends meet by selling kitcheware. In her spare time, she joined the Ninoy Aquino Movement and the street demonstrations against the Marcoses in the US.

Post-Edsa, Gloria stayed in the sidelines. President Corazon Aquino appointed Amado as consul in San Francisco, a post he held until 1992.

Two years later, President Joseph Estrada made Amado ambassador to 11 Pacific states in the US, in which capacity he served until a year before his passing in 2003.

Gloria herself has been appointed by President Macapagal-Arroyo as Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) board member.

"We visited Melbourne, Australia," she reports. "We observed in vocational schools. Every now and then, we also go to the Visayas and Mindanao to conduct seminars for Tesda."

Seems show biz has been shelved for this mother of seven and grandmother of 12.

"I'm also active in Rivers of the Living Water, a Catholic organization," she says. "I also host a radio show, 'Inday sa Balitaw,' on DZRB, every Saturday, from 4 to 5 p.m."

She made a TV comeback recently on QTV 11's Friday night sitcom "Ganding Loik Ko"—with Bella Flores and Ba-

by O'Brien. Daughter Suzette Ranillo directed her and Nora Aunor on "Care Home," a TV drama special on Filipina caregivers abroad.

Last Saturday, "Badis" was shown at the "Aktris: Pelikula at Lipunan" film festival mounted by Mowelfund at the Gateway Mall.

Even in her golden years, unstoppable and indefatigable Gloria is stacking a full plate in front of her.

"For the love of..." she asserts. "I want to continue to help in my own little way. When you grow old, your only goal in life is to be of service."

IN THE 1990s, with Amado



IN "Palad Ta ang Nagbuot," with Gabriel "Flash" Elorde and Rebecca Gonzales

ROUNDUP

Offensive hairdo

ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO—An Indian family sued the producers of Steven Spielberg's television miniseries, "Into the West," claiming a set stylist cut their 8-year-old daughter's hair without regard for tribal customs.

"Just because you're wealthy, you don't do something without checking first," the girl's father, Danny Ponce, said Friday. The family is Mescalero Apache.

Ponce filed suit in federal court on March 6, naming Turner Films Inc. and an unidentified stylist as defendants. The lawsuit seeks \$250,000 for emotional distress and \$75,000 in damages.

A Turner Films spokesperson said the company doesn't comment on pending litigation.

AP

Nick's sitcom

LOS ANGELES—Nick Lachey could be looking at another steady TV gig.

Heading toward single status in real life as his divorce from Jessica Simpson nears completion, he'll play a bachelor in a sitcom pilot for the new CW network.

He'll star as Colin, a single man living in Manhattan, in the comedy "She Said/He Said," CW spokesperson Paul McGuire said Friday.

Other cast members are still being hired for the pilot that will shoot in April, McGuire said.

AP

Back to work

LOS ANGELES—Maternity leave is over for Oscar winner Julia Roberts, who is planning her return to the silver screen, Hollywood trade magazine *Variety* reported Friday.

Roberts, 39, began her maternity leave in early 2005 to take care of her twin children.

The famous "Pretty Woman" is now in final talks to star in a movie titled "Daniel Isn't Talking," based on a novel by Marti Leimbach.

The movie, about the challenges of a family that raises an autistic child, is to be produced by Karen Rosenthal with a script by Stephen Chbosky ("Rent").

Roberts has already starred in a movie based on a Leimbach book, "Dying Young" (1991).

AP

Not for good

LOS ANGELES—Michael Jackson has shuttered his Neverland Valley Ranch home and laid off staff, but contrary to media reports the pop star has not shut down the estate for good, his spokesperson said on Friday.

Jackson's plans for the sprawling central California ranch have been in question since March 9, when state officials fined the singer \$69,000 and effectively closed the estate because he allowed his workers compensation insurance to lapse.

The 47-year-old entertainer was also fined an estimated \$100,000 for failing to issue paychecks to Neverland's workers for four months, but dodged legal action this week by paying employees hundreds of thousands of dollars in back wages. Reuters

Getting married

LOS ANGELES—"Desperate Housewives" actress Nicolette Sheridan and singer Michael Bolton are engaged, Sheridan's publicist confirmed.

Sheridan, 42, and Bolton, 53, dated for several years in the 1990s and rekindled their romance last year.

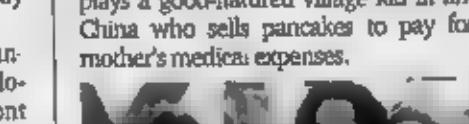
Sheridan was married to actor Harry Hamlin from 1991 to 1993. Bolton ended his 15-year marriage to Maureen McGuire, with whom he has three daughters, in 1990.

AP

Siu Bang

WILLIAM Hung, "American Idol" reject-turned-pop star and TV celebrity, has added "movie star" to his résumé with "Where's Mama's Boy," his first feature film.

In the movie, showing on March 28, 12:05 p.m. on Star Chinese Movies, Hung plays a good-natured village kid in ancient China who sells pancakes to pay for his mother's medical expenses.



Signed up

VIVA Entertainment has signed up three finalists of the recently concluded "Search for a Star in a Million" on ABS-CBN.

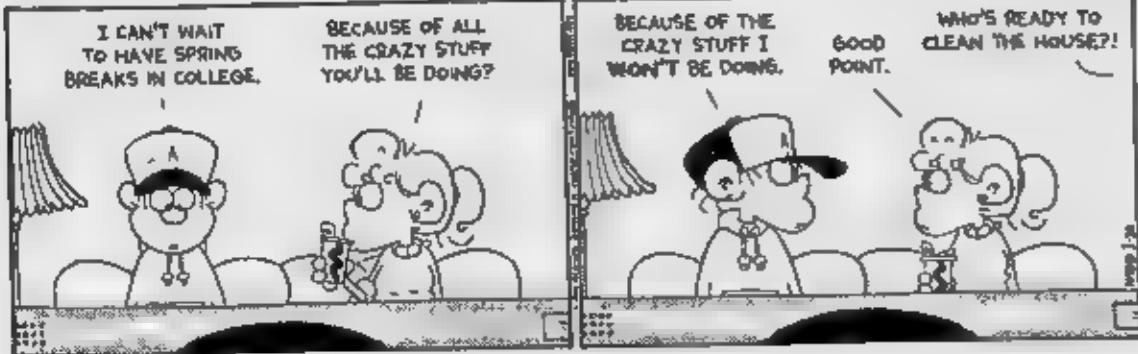
The new Viva recording artists—shown in photo with Veronique del Rosario, managing director of Viva Artists Agency—are, from left, Jay Perillo, Jimmy Marquez and Vino Bello.

Now on disc

"TIM BURTON's Corpse Bride" and "Mutant Dogs" are now available on DVD and VCD (in wide screen and full screen formats) from Warner Home Video.

"Bride" on DVD contains behind-the-scenes footage and animation featurettes; "Dogs" has additional scenes.

FOXTROT



BY BILL AMEND

A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA

MARVIN



BY TOM ARMSTRONG

PUGAD BABOY



BY PM. JUNIOR

BABY BLUES



BY JERRY SCOTT

MUTTS



BY PATRICK McDONNELL

ATOMO AND WEBBOY



BY LYRA GARCIELANO

DIVINE COMEDY



BY STEVEN PABALINAS

MIKROKOSMOS



BY JOMIKE TEJ DO

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a logical, analytical mind. Your sensitivity is not always apparent, but it's there. Most of you are talented in several fields. At times, you're a dreamy idealist, but your feet are always on the ground. You value friendship. Everyone knows you're a romantic. Prepare to work hard this year for success in the following year.

Birthdate of: Spike Lee, director/writer; William Hurt, actor; Holly Hunter, actress

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Today the Sun moves into your sign. Happy birthday! It's your turn to recharge your batteries for the rest of the year. Put yourself first now.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Your popularity rating definitely increases now! Everyone wants to see your face. Accept all invitations. Enjoy good times with others.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You have an increasing desire to travel now. You want more out of life. You want to see more of the world! And you want to learn more too.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): The Sun is now at high noon in your chart. This acts like a spotlight on you. Everyone notices you, especially VIPs and important people. Milk this for all it's worth.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You feel quite intensely about things now and for the next few weeks. You won't get to the bottom of something. You will not settle for superficial explanations.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): The Sun is now as far away from your sign as it will get all year. Because of this, you might feel tired. (The Sun gives us energy.) Partnerships will be a strong focus now.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You have a lot of energy now to get organized. You're working hard to improve your life both at work and at home. Great! Make hay while the sun shines!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): The next few weeks are a lovely, playful, flirtatious time for you. Accept invitations to parties, get out and schmooze with friends.

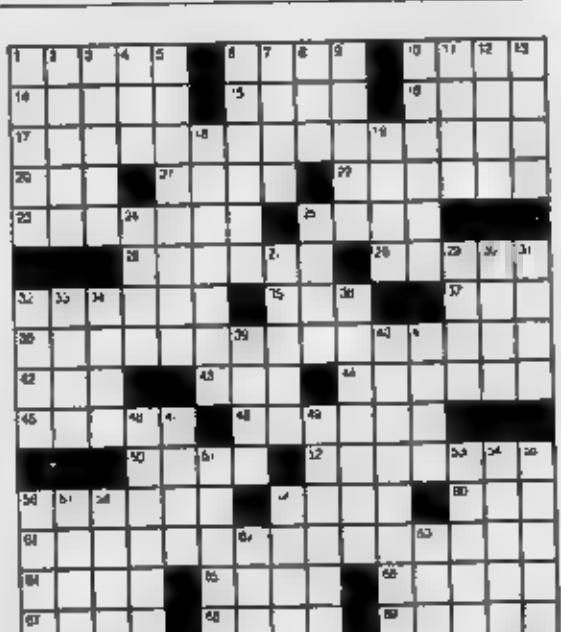
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Now is the time to swing your focus to home, family and domestic matters. Parents assume a greater role in your life. You want to solidify your home.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You have a busy month ahead. Errands, short trips, conversations with others, increased time with siblings plus wheeling and dealing keep your dance card full!

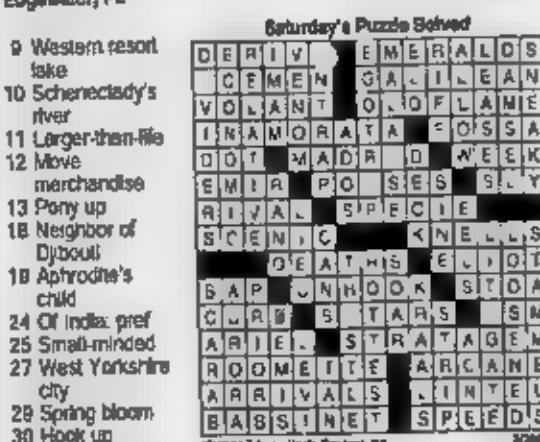
PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): In the next few weeks, you're giving a lot of thought to money, possessions and what it is you really want in life. First you have to figure out what makes you happy.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Saxon
2 Brewery supply
10 City near Phoenix
14 Matthew's love in "Grumpier Old Men"
15 Eye part
16 Event for all corners
17 Pour it on
20 "Pinatolone"
21 Bird crop
22 All-seeing one
23 Headache remedy
25 Persian word?
26 Annoy
28 Cur comers
32 James of "Boston Legal"
36 Musician's asset
37 Olds creation
38 Pour it on
42 Brynner of "Westworld"
43 In addition
44 Full of spirit
45 Sad piece
46 Overthrows
50 Chimed
52 Now hold off
55 Esoteric
58 Shuddle grip
60 Cover
61 Pour it on
64 School on the Themes
65 Eat family
66 Irregularly worn
67 Studio structures
68 Words from a prof
69 Was deserving



By James E. Buell
Edgewater, FL



46 Cereals
47 Sudden pull
48 Applications
49 Impoverished
50 "The Naming of Cats" poet
51 "The Naming of Cats" poet
52 Shampooing step
53 Skinned
54 Ford's Blue Eagle
55 Coagulate
56 Mechanical learning
57 Ford's Blue Eagle
58 Becomes mellow
59 Coagulate
60 1452 caravel
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KHO MACHINE



BY MANIX ABRERA

LOVEKNOTS



BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

TULDOK



BY PAPU AND TATUM MIAMBILING

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Ang pamilyang kinuha sa kanya
Noong siya'y musmos pa lamang.

Sa kanyang pakikipagsapalaran.
Makikilala niya sa mahiwagang daigdig si Argo...
Ang Salamangkang magmamahal at magtuturo
Sa kanya ng...



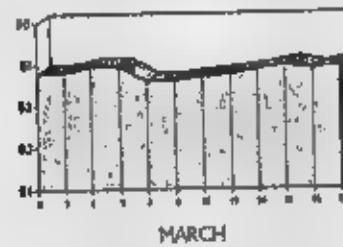
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P 51.04 = S
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Y 116.68 = S
As of 5 p.m., March 17, 2006

GOLD: \$551.10-\$551.60
per ounce Hong Kong, March 16, 2006

Slow week ahead

STOCKS MAY SUCUMB TO SOME PROFIT-
tarding this week, some analysts said, following
the run-up that marked last week's trading.
AB Capital Securities said that since the market
has moved up in the last six sessions, there
may be some room for technical correction.
"The technical indicators are giving a mixed

SLOW/B13

BUSINESS

Editor Raul O. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma

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Gov't to raise bond float by P100B

Authorities are hoping to borrow more from domestic market

By Doris C. Dumala

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT, hoping to borrow more from the domestic market, has secured the approval of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to increase its long-term peso bond float by as much as P100 billion.

The BSP's policy-making Monetary Board gave the state a standby authority to issue P100 billion more in fresh Treasury bonds during its meeting last Thursday.

The next day, the Development Budget Coordination Committee agreed to revise the government's borrowing mix to favor more domestic issuances, government sources said.

A member of the DBCC's executive technical board said the inter-agency council on Friday agreed to further amend the government's borrowing mix in favor of domestic financing.

For every P1 worth of financing requirement,

GOVT/B13



TECH TOOLS

OPENING
A new business technology center has been set for small and medium enterprises, allowing them access to business and technology expertise. On hand at the opening are Carissa P. Cruz of the trade department and Virgilio Peria of the Commission on Information and Communications Technology (seated). Looking on are Antonio Javier of Microsoft Philippines, and Ricky Banaag of Intel Philippines.

BSP issues tougher set of guidelines for 'problem' banks

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS is getting tougher on problem banks by plotting a stricter framework that will require these institutions to undertake "prompt corrective action" at the first sign of weakness.

The BSP's policy-making Monetary Board recently approved the stiffer set of guidelines that will zero in on the weakest in the banking system and force these institutions to undertake remedial measures once they fall below the standards set.

"This is so that the problems would not worsen," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. told reporters. "At an early stage, a bank should already take steps to strengthen its financial position."

"These steps will be contained in a

plan of action which will be in a memorandum of agreement that will be signed by the bank's board of directors and BSP."

Tetangco said the new PCA framework

B13/B13

WHAT'S INSIDE

Tessie's counter-gambit /B3

ING expects peso to further appreciate to 45:\$1 /B6

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Motorcycle firms push for standards

By Ronnel W.
Domingo

MOTORCYCLE MANUFACTURERS are pushing for the standardization of global regulations related to the industry due to growing sales, particularly in Asia and the Philippines.

Philippine turnover outpaced that of the region with an increase of 20.3 percent to some 493,000 units last year from about 410,000 in 2004.

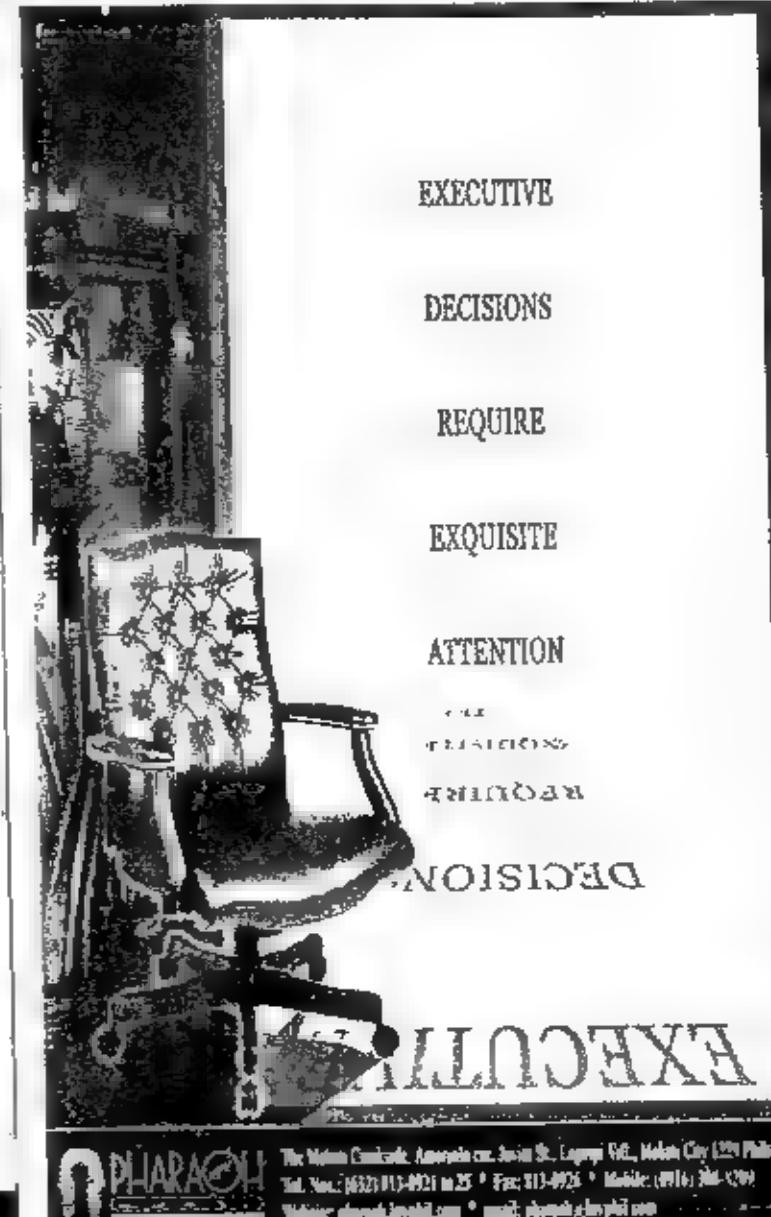
Regional sales accounted for about 92 percent of some 18.4 million units produced by all eight members of FAMI last year.

FAMI groups national organizations Asosiasi Industri Sepeda Motor Indonesia, Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association, Motorcycle and Scooter Assemblers and Distributors Association of Malaysia, Motorcycle Development Program Participants Association of the Philippines, Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers, Singapore Motor Cycle Trade Association, Thai Automotive Industry Association, and Taiwan Transportation Vehicle Manufacturers.

FAMI leaders gathered in Makati City last Saturday for their annual meeting as well as to cement an agreement with counterparts in the International Motorcycle Manufacturers Association to join the Geneva-based global group.

Mohammed Aiddid, FAMI president, said in a briefing that his group's decision to join IMMA meant that FAMI had accepted a bigger role in the development of the world industry.

Mohammed said the industry was generally growing worldwide and that its major concerns were road safety and environmental protection.



We've got something in common...



A meticulous artist
who inspires through
his creations
-Joel, Abstract Painter
UITF Investor



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patronage for the arts
yields classics
Mae, Art Dealer
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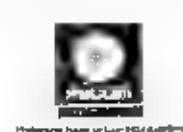
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Tessie's counter-gambit

AMID RENTLESS BOARDROOM MA- neuverings and media snippings, an exasperated Teresita Sy has indicated that she is all but ready to agree to Winston Garcia's proposal and join GSIS, and possibly SSS, in selling the Sy group's stake in Equitable PCIBank.

PLDT's Manuel V. Pangilinan, in the meantime, denied that he and his First Pacific Group ever expressed interest in taking control of Equitable PCIBank.

"We are not in any discussion with any of the shareholders of the bank—not one or more of the SSS, GSIS or the Sy family—in respect of acquiring their stake," MVP said.

MVP, who was reached in Hong Kong on Saturday, said he also sent the same texted reply to the SM heiress and to Corazon de la Paz, president of the Social Security System and Equitable PCIBank chair.

MVP's name and that of the First Pacific Group cropped up after MVP, a former banker himself, had been noted asking key Equitable PCIBank stakeholders

"discreet questions" about the bank's conditions.

Sy, in the meantime, gave Garcia two weeks, or up to the end of the month, to produce a written binding offer for the SM/Banco de Oro's estimated 34 percent stake in Equitable PCIBank.

Sy's terms: Cash, and no due diligence.

Should Garcia's mystery buyer agree to Sy's terms, the mall queen would have, in just a year, doubled her initial investment in the disputed bank to salve her bruised ego and thwarted ambition.

As of mid-2005, Equitable PCIBank had slightly over 727 million outstanding shares; at P95 each, the Sy block would already be worth nearly P23.5 billion.

Throwing in the 12 percent of the Government Service Insurance System and the adjusted 25 percent of the SSS, the entire deal could be worth more than P49 billion, not counting the additional P20 billion that Garcia's mystery buyer would have to provide

COCKTAILS



Victor C. Agustin

for the mandatory tender offer for the rest of Equitable PCIBank's minority shareholders.

(Garcia, however, claims the cash needed for mandatory tender offer for the minority stake should not be over P6 billion, since seven percent of the balance, held by the family of bank vice chair Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, is still sequestered, while 10 percent is being held by the bank in disputed treasury shares.)

One senior banker, commenting on the scale of the continuing boardroom saga, said: "For a moment, I thought he (Winston) was bluffing, but things seem to be turning his way. Asking price is way out, but someone out there may be

drunk enough to throw money at it even at that outrageous price."

Mike boys' cash cow

THE MESTIZO relatives of Mike Arroyo, now lording it over cash-rich Philcomsat Holdings Corp., have asked for another indefinite postponement of the publicly listed company.

The octogenarian head of PHC, Manuel Nieto, has written the Securities and Exchange Commission to reconsider its order directing the contested corporation to hold the already much delayed election, its first since August 2004.

With the SEC and the Supreme Court's decisions, it is only a matter of time before Nieto, his nephew and Mike Arroyo's cousin Benito Araneta and fellow Malacañang nominee, Free Press publisher Enrique "Henry" Locsin, lose control of POTC because of their reduced PCGG shareholdings.

Despite being hardly traded, POTC sits on over P1.2 billion in cash it inherited during the Estrada years. POTC cor-

porate secretary Louie Lakan at that time admitted that the bulk of the cash had been deposited at Bank Wise, the troubled savings bank that has transferred ownership from Erap cronies to Mike Arroyo allies.

Araneta was lately seen meeting with top Bank Wise officials at the Makati Shangri-la, amid a request from Philippine Veterans Bank for the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. to extend P3 billion in assistance in exchange for PVB being asked to help the troubled thrift bank.

Heard through the grapevine

A GROUP of tucked-off La Salle alumnus and donors met with Bro. Armin Luistro last week to express their displeasure over the religious official being part of the "hakot-padasal" brigade and using the school facilities for the oust-GMA campaign. The meeting was held in the Punta penthouse office of former Environment Secretary Ramon del Rosario Jr.

(Email: cocktails_pdi@pltdst.net or cocktails_pdi@yahoo.com)

LG Named Global No. 1 Air Conditioner

For six consecutive years since 2000, LG Electronics' air-conditioner was proclaimed GLOBAL No. 1 by the Japan Air-Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration News (JARN). In the banner story of its latest newsletter publication released worldwide to over 300 countries, LG Electronics remained on top of its competitors by posting a high 45% difference in global sales over its nearest competitor.

LG Electronics' air-conditioner has also posted 10 million units sales for two consecutive years since 2004.

2000-2005
Global No. 1

Local Recognitions and Awards

Similarly, LG Electronics Philippines received two distinguished commendations and awards from the Consumer Group Philippines and the Union of Consumer Watch in October and November, 2005 respectively.

GOLD FIN Technology
Since the mid-1990s, LGE air conditioners have remained the top choice by consumers around the world. LGE boasts of breakthrough and pioneering technologies which have been the driving force behind LGE's success in the air-conditioning industry.

Among its key features, and unique only to LGE air conditioners, is the GOLD FIN Anti-Rust Coating Technology. LGE Gold Fin is a coating of a layer of gold on aluminum and applied on every LGE air-conditioning unit to prevent corrosion and keep the unit's appearance and performance staying as good as new.



5 - o - n - 5
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with a full 5-on-5 Warranty which includes a 5-year coverage on not just the compressor but four other parts that include the condenser, evaporator, adjoining tubes and connectors.

More Innovations from LGE

In late October 2005, LGE unveiled its new MPS environment-friendly inverter system, the "Multi-V Plus" and "eco V". The environment-friendly MPS (Multi-Power System) inverter system, the first of its kind in the Philippines, uses environment-friendly refrigerant "R-410A" which does not destroy or harm the ozone layer. The relevant market for the new product is rapidly increasing in accordance with Indoor Air Quality management laws that took effect in early January 2006, and the implementation of the Housing Performance Grade Marking System.

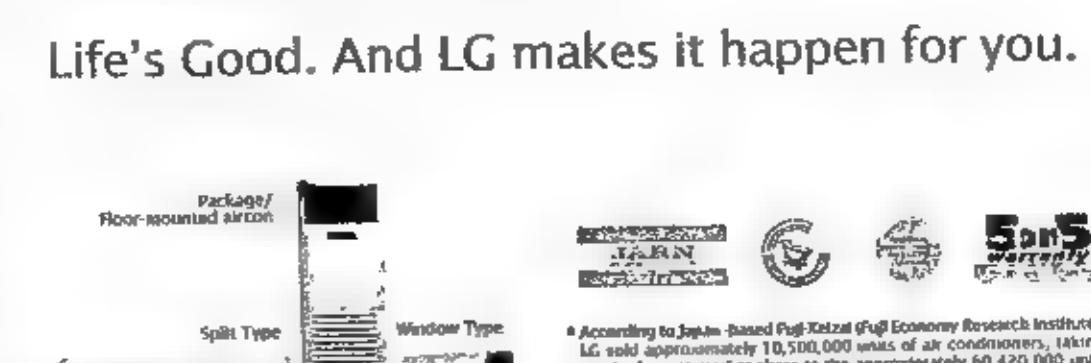


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According to Japan-based Fuji Keizai (Full Economy Research Institute),
LG sold approximately 10,500,000 units of air conditioners, taking
up the largest market share in the approximately 60,420,000 unit-
size industry. Research results of Fuji Keizai are published annually
on JARN (Japan Air Conditioning, Heating & Refrigeration News).

LG Electronics Philippines No. 15 F, Legaspi St., Makati City • Tel. Nos. 641-4181 to 85 Fax Nos. 640-0406, 641-9466 CIC Hotline 640-2525 0917-8242525 0920-9002525
<http://ph.lge.com>



MONDAY,
MARCH 20, 2006

B3

Hotel gets incentives

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE GOKONGWEI GROUP HAS SECURED tax perks and other incentives for its P1.5-billion Crowne Plaza Galleria Manila Hotel at the Ortigas Center.

Data from the Board of Investments showed that Robinsons Land Corp.'s project was the biggest in terms of cost among the projects approved under the agency's simplified registration process between Jan. 1 and March 10.

Trade Undersecretary Elmer C. Hernandez said that under the 2005 Investments Priorities Plan, investments related to tourism were a priority considering that there are not enough rooms available for foreign visitors.

He also said the project was given pioneer status because of the huge project cost.

"The IPP guidelines for the tourism sector provides that hotel projects that would spend at least \$100,000 (about P5.3 million at the time of RBL's filing of application last year) a room or more are entitled to full incentives," Hernandez said.

With 265 rooms, Crowne Plaza exceeded the hurdle at P5.68 million for each room.

The project is expected to start full operation in October and will create 115 new jobs.

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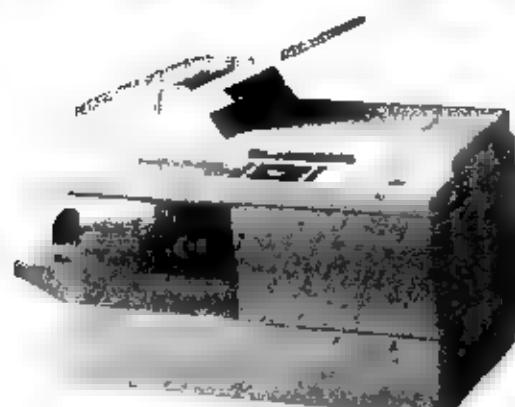
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Alexander Yu, ME 4
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through the process of Situation
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Reggie Santos, ME 4
Almont, Iloilo

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Reggie Santos, ME 4
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BUSINESS

ING expects peso to further appreciate to 45:\$1

By Doris C. Dumao

DUTCH FINANCIAL GIANT ING Bank sees the peso surging to as

high as 45:\$1 in the next two years.

This was the most bullish outlook on the peso published so far,

even surpassing Goldman Sachs' prediction that the local currency would rise to 48:\$1 over the next 12 months.

In a commentary dated March 17, ING economist Tim Condon said the country's strong balance of payment position in the first two months of the year indicated the extent of foreign exchange in-

flow that had helped lift the peso against the greenback.

The Philippines posted a BOP surplus of \$2.03 billion in the first two months of the year, nearly three times the \$685 million recorded in the same period last year.

"The January-February surplus was \$1.3 billion wider year-on-year, which highlights the pres-

sure on the central bank as it attempts to dissipate some of the upward pressure," Condon said.

The BOP measures the foreign exchange transactions between the domestic economy and the rest of the world.

The peso has been appreciating since the start of the year.

It hit levels not seen since close

to four years ago, and peaked at 50.88:\$1 despite continuing political uncertainties.

As of last Friday, the peso closed at 51.04 against the US dollar.

Not everybody is cheering the strengthening peso, however, as some exporters and economists had said that there were consequences to a strong peso.

Vehicle makers urged to support ethanol use

By Abigail L. Ho

PUSHING FOR THE USE OF ethanol-blended gasoline, the Philippine Fuel Ethanol Alliance continues to hold dialogs with the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. (Campi) to get their endorsement for the product.

The Ethanol Alliance said it appreciated Campi's openness in continuing to hold discussions on the matter of using ethanol-blended gasoline.

The group also assayed Campi's apprehensions that vehicle manufacturers would not have enough time to modify their engines, if necessary, to accommodate a 5 percent ethanol content in gasoline, which would eventually be increased to 10 percent.

The Ethanol Alliance said the automotive industry would not likely be caught off guard by the passage of a bill that would mandate the sale and use of ethanol-blended gasoline as implementation would be phased.

Under the pending biofuels bill, the mandatory sale and use of ethanol-blended gasoline will start two years after the effectiveness of the law.

"This should give all stakeholders sufficient time to prepare," the Ethanol Alliance said.

The group said that while the worries of vehicle manufacturers were "understandable," these should not serve as a hurdle to the country's goal of becoming energy self-sufficient through the use of alternative transport fuels.

ICTSI profit hits P1.3B

By Daxim L. Lucas

at the company's international operations provided most of the increase in full year earnings relative to the prior year.

Foreign operations contributed 34 percent of 2005's consolidated net income, as compared with 27 percent in 2004 and a net loss in 2003.

Razon, however, was disappointed with his company's performance at home.

ICTSI handled consolidated 1.838 million twenty foot equivalent units (TEUs) of cargo in 2005, 2.5 percent more than the 1.793 million handled in 2004.

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF CAPIZ
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BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Provincial Government of Capiz thru its BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE invites interested suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

Name of Contract: Materials use for the concreting of Capiz-Iloilo Road, Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Iloilo Road Section

Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC): P4,218,060

Source of Fund: Trust Fund

1. Portland Cement (Type-I)	2,1804
2. Coco Lumber 2x3" ■■■	8
3. Assid C W Nails	20 1/2
4. 12mm x 6.0 RSB	100
5. 16mm x 6.0 RSB	450
6. Blown Asphalt	2
7. Flat Bar 3/16" x 2 x 6m	2
8. Laminated Sack	50
9. #16 Tie Wire	50
10. 1/2x10" 3/4" lumber	100
11. White Reflectized Paint	5
12. Yellow Reflectized Paint	1

BAC Activities	Schedule
1. Submission of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application of Eligibility	
2. Issuance of Bid documents	April 10-20, 2006
3. Pre-Bid Conference	April 17, 2006
4. Opening of Bids	April 21, 2006

1. In order to qualify for publication in the public bidding, bidders should conform to all eligibility requirements as prescribed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Republic Act 9184.

2. The BAC will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility forms at Provincial General Services Office, Provincial Capitol, Roxas City upon their submission of a LOI, and upon their payment of prescribed non-refundable fee of PESOS: Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00).

3. Bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC at the same time.

4. Bidders shall drop their duly accomplished technical and financial proposals in two separate envelopes in the bid boxes before the deadline of submission of bids, if they have not earlier pre-qualified.

5. All Bids must be accomplished by a bid security in a form of cash and must be delivered to the PGSO on or before the bid closing date.

6. BAC Committee assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

7. BAC Committee reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure or not to award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd) G. ANTONIO ARBIS

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation
INVITATION FOR BIDS

Date: March 13, 2006
Loan No.: CALYON
Contract No.: Sp05.MBTBP.M-0060

The Abanag Power Corporation (APC) has received a loan from the Buyer's Credit Facility arranged by CALYON through a Master Credit Arrangement for Maragag-Bunawan Project and it is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied as eligible payments under the contract Survey, Design, Supply of Materials/Equipment and Erection/Installation and Commissioning of Maragag-Bunawan 220kV Transmission Backbone Project.

Bidders shall be from eligible source country of Calyon Buyer's Credit Facility only (United States, Austria, Belgium, England, Denmark, South Korea, Netherlands, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland).

The National Transmission Corporation (TRANSCO) administering the implementation of the said project, now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the:

Survey, Design, Supply of Materials/Equipment and Erection/Installation and Commissioning of Maragag-Bunawan 220kV Transmission Backbone Project.

Blidders may obtain further information from and inspect and acquire the bidding documents of the Office of the Manager, Bids and Contracts Management Department, Ground Floor, Power Center, National Transmission Corporation, Quezon Avenue corner BFR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Telephone No. 981-2212, 981-2213, 981-4652; Telefax No. 927-23-08.

A complete set of bidding documents may be obtained by interested eligible bidders starting March 23, 2006 upon submission of a written application to the above office, and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Forty Thousand Pesos (PHP 40,000.00).

A two envelope bidding procedure will be adopted. Bidders are to submit simultaneously two (2) sealed envelopes, one (1) containing the technical proposal and one (1) containing the price proposal. Initially only the technical proposals will be opened. Technical proposals which are submitted by non-qualified bidders or which are not substantially responsive will be rejected. The substantially responsive technical proposals that have been submitted by qualified bidders are discussed with the bidders and the bidders are requested for full compliance. The bidders may or may not submit a supplementary price proposal, which contain the changes in price resulting from the discussed changes in the technical proposals. The original price proposal and the supplementary price proposal are opened simultaneously in public.

All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of:

Two Hundred Eighteen Thousand One Hundred Forty Seven US Dollars (US\$218,147.00).

The bid security must be included in the technical proposal.

Pre-bid Conference shall be conducted on April 27, 2006.

The deadline for the submission of bids will be on June 7, 2006 at 1:30 P.M. at the aforementioned address. Late submission will be rejected.

The technical proposals together with the bid security will be opened immediately thereafter in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend.

The price proposals will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the time and date and at the address as advised by the Employer after approval of the evaluation of the technical proposals.

The total contract duration for the project is 400 calendar days.

TRANSCO reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.

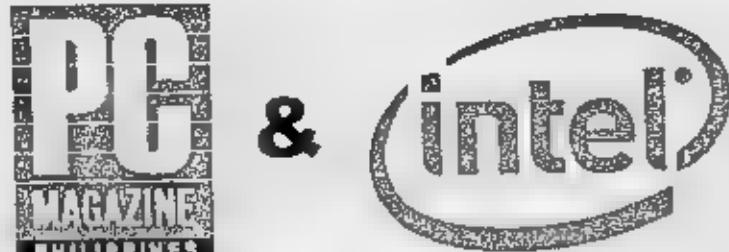
All communications shall be addressed to the Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee at aforementioned address.

(Sgd) GUILLERMO R. REDOBALDO
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

PD1 - March 13, 2006 17, 2006

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MONDAY,
MARCH 20, 2006

BUSINESS

B7

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of March 17, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
Alatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.7	3.7	3.5	3.5	3
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	35	35	34.5	35	205,300
Bank of the Phil. Islands	62	62	61.5	62	634,460
China Banking Corp.	180	19	19	19	3,270
Citystate Savings Bank	0.4	0.4	0.38	0.39	57,900
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	75	78.6	74.5	74.5	415,800
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	28	37	25	27	565,300
International Exch. Bank	37	37.5	37	37.5	1,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	32	32	32	32	3,700
Philippine National Bank	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	1,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5	45,500
Security Bank Corp.	34.5	34.5	34.5	34.5	5,400
Union Bank of the Phil.	24	24.5	24	24.5	800
First Metro Invest. Corp.	32.40	32.40	32.40	32.40	120
Manulife Financial Corp.	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	25,000
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	2,160	2,180	2,180	2,180	42
Sun Life Financial Inc.	0.81	0.82	0.81	0.82	3,460,000
Invantage Corp.					
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
INDUSTRIAL					
ELectRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	41.5	42	41.5	42	22,000
First Phil Holdings Corp.	41.5	42.5	41	42.5	453,500
Manila Electric Co. A	13	13	12.75	13	187,000
Manila Water Co. Inc.	20	20	19.75	20	382,000
Patron Corp.	6.4	6.5	6.4	6.5	337,000
Edat Asia Power Res. Corp.	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.6	3,094,000
TransAsia Oil and Energy	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	430,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alestra Milk Corp.	3.8	3.65	3.6	3.65	5,000
Globe San Miguel Inc.	18.5	19	18.5	18.5	132,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	38.5	38.5	38	38	237,700
RFM Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	10,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.78	1.78	1.74	1.76	518,000
San Miguel Corp. A	80.5	61	60	60.5	26,500
San Miguel Corp. B	77.5	78	75.5	78	229,200
Universal Robina Corp.	17.25	17.5	17.25	17.5	20,000
Vianich Corp.	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	200,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.29	0.3	0.28	0.29	2,480,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.26	1.3	2,165,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	20,000
Modular Philippines Inc.	4.35	4.4	4.35	4.4	240,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	200,000
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	22,000
Globe Equities Inc.	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	400,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.0725	0.0725	1,400,000
Stater Manufacturing	0.32	0.35	0.32	0.35	90,000
Absolute Con Res & Hdg A	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	40,000,000
Avea Corp.	342.5	345	342.5	345	70,040
Ajunti Corp. Res. Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	140,000
Absolute Equity Ventures	4.95	5	4.95	5	285,000
AGI Net Holdings Inc.	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024	6,480,000
AGI Sonoma Corp.	2.48	2.46	2.46	2.46	1,300
API Group Inc.	0.21	0.225	0.21	0.23	2,690,000
Akorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	13,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	250,000
Bethanion Doms Indus. Inc.	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5	58,000
Bentley Holdings Corp.	0.93	0.97	0.93	0.97	10,640,000
DNC Holdings Inc.	2.95	2.95	2.95	2.95	20,000
Fil-Net Corp.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	110,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	2.44	2.44	2.44	2.44	1,983,000
JG Summit Holdings Inc.	5	5.1	5	5.1	1,307,000
Medco Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	80,000
Primo Orion Phs. Inc.	0.245	0.25	0.245	0.25	7,290,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.51	0.53	0.51	0.53	50,000
Stetho Corp.	0.136	0.14	0.135	0.14	26,690,000
SM Investments Corp.	224	225	224	225	85
South China Resources Inc.	0.73	0.74	0.73	0.74	130,000
Safarit Resources Corp.	0.41	0.48	0.41	0.48	490,000
Wallex Industries Inc.	0.13	0.14	0.125	0.14	3,080,000
PROPERTY					
Avala Land Inc.	10.5	10.75	10.5	10.5	4,617,000
Batu Corp.	0.98	1.05	0.99	1.04	2,570,000
Crown Estates Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	1,650,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.76	1.76	1.76	1.76	1,215,000
C&P Homes Inc.	1.96	1.96	1.96	1.96	380,000
Cebu Prop. Vert. A	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	10,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	800,000
EBI Realty Developers Inc.	0.16	0.21	0.18	0.21	530,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.51	0.51	0.5	0.5	7,820,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.71	0.75	0.7	0.74	1,530,000
Flinwest Land Inc.	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	4,480,000
Hughards Prime Inc.	3	3	3	3	50,000
Kidz Phil. Properties	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	8,000
FM Estate, Land and Inc.	0.45	0.48	0.45	0.48	290,000
Marstel Cons. Inc. B	0.018	0.016	0.01	0.016	1,000,000
Medaworld Corp.	1.45	1.46	1	1.46	5,037,000
Metrop. Pacific Corp.	1.33	0.93	0.32	0.32	11,560
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	50,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	6.6	6.7	6.6	6.6	335,000
Phil. Realty and Holdings	0.25	0.27	0.245	0.27	7,300
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6	8.1	8	8.1	3,245,000
Uniwids Holdings Inc.	0.135	0.14	0.135	0.135	5,660
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	17,500
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1.32	1.32	1.3	1.32	101,000
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.68	0.68	600,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	885	885	885	875	22,780
Philippine Tel. Corp.	31	31.5	30.5	30.5	3,571,000
Phil. Long Dis. Tel Co	1,830	1,830	1,820	1,825	75,690
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.2	0.2	5,110,000
Ionics Inc.	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	74,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	600,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.0525	0.055	0.0525	0.055	36,500,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	2,000
Philweb Corp.	0.023	0.023	0.022	0.023	27,300,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.96	1.96	1.96	1.96	1,000
Int'l Container Term'n Sv	12.5	12.5	12	12	458,000
Kapell Phks. Marine Inc.	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97	60,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	10,000
ACASIS Phils. Hotel Corp.	3.55	3.55	3.55	3.55	705,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.84	1.88	1.82	1.88	5,692,000
Waterfront Publ. Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.4	0.4	900,000
EDUCATION					
Fer Eastern University	605	605	600	600	2,470
Ipeople Inc.	315	3.2	3.15	3.2	58,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macrosia Corp.	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.6	265,000
Paxys Inc.	8.4	8.5	8.2	8.4	524,000
Philcoms Holdings Corp.	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	20,000
APOX Mining Co. Inc. A	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	1,000
Albra Mining & Industrial	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	5,000,0

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iBlog, iPodcast: Citizen journalism using tech

By Leo Magno

(Third of four parts)

WE HAVE DISCUSSED WHY NEW media citizen journalists—bloggers and podcasters in particular—are getting influential, if we are to define influence as being noticed and listened to by government, mainstream media and the public. We have also discussed the pitfalls of referring to this trend as a new form of journalism. We have also heard from mainstream media and from new media publishers who, they said, do not even consider themselves journalists.

Theoretically then, bloggers and podcasters should not be harassed or censored if they are seen merely as files that refuse to go away. But why do charges of sedition and active censorship still occur? Why are blogs and podcasts being monitored by government? Why is there a seeming insecurity on the part of traditional media? Why should new media grassroots journalism be considered a threat?

Blogs and podcasts are disruptive technologies. They arrive at the party, offer something new, start playing a new song and dance to a new beat, they tear the piñata down and before you know it the tables have been overturned and the party will never be the same again. That party is traditional media—television, radio and print. Any new addition to a set with the potential to disrupt established

norms would naturally be seen as a threat. Traditional media is pushed out of its comfort zone of having the final say on matters of news and opinion. Traditional media may even feel that with grassroots journalists they may become disenfranchised.

Old habits, new habits

Perhaps blogs, podcasts and new media in general are seen as threats because of changing information assimilation behaviors of the audience.

"Already today, some blogs have more regular readers than major nationwide newspapers in the United States," said Ronald Meinardus of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation. "Blogs are particularly popular with younger people. Once they grow older they will have different media consumption patterns than today's adults. I am not saying that the newspapers will disappear, but their share of the media pie will shrink."

As New York-based future media analyst and new media consultant Andrew Zoli said: "Why is newspaper readership declining? Why are people not going to movies? It's because people are making their own media, and the low cost of participation is allowing them to become co-equal participants. Do you think they need to ask permission from journalists?"

This, Zoli said, is why initially there will be animosity between new media and old media.

"What is changing for them and for journalists is that the line between be-

ing an editor and a writer is blurring," he said. "The bad thing about it is that it's becoming too politicized. A turf war is happening between traditional journalists and the new online journalists."

"Fewer people are buying newspapers and watching TV. I am conscious of that fact. They're going somewhere else," said Joshua Gibbons, Australian reporter and blogger for The Bulletin, a weekly news magazine published in Sydney.

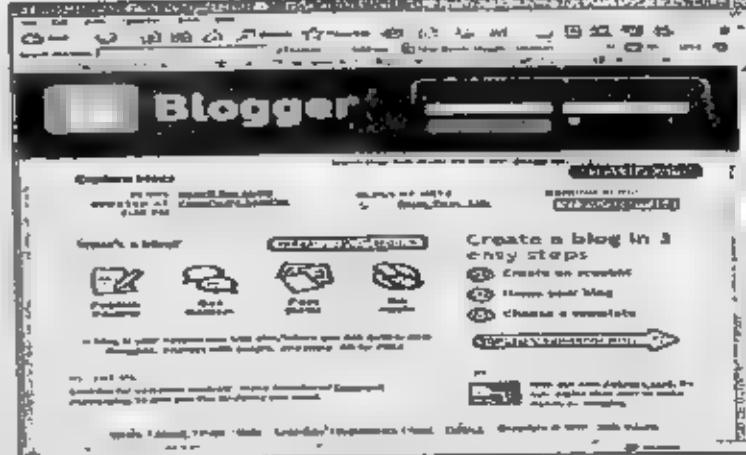
"I think us journalists have to address three things today," he said. "One is that we no longer set the agenda. Bloggers are setting the agenda. We're putting the reportage in the hands of the people. The scary part is that traditional media just don't get it despite the fact that the shift is happening and it's already here."

"Two is that in the world of blogs and podcasts, people want to hear more human voices. They want to hear real voices. There's a lack of trust that's widening between the people and traditional media."

"Three is that us journalists, if we're gonna adapt to this change, we need to be transparent. There is a lack of transparency and we need to admit our mistakes. If we don't, someone else online will point them out through their blogs, and those mistakes will remain forever."

New watchdogs

So here we are seeing a watchdog function for citizen journalists. Whereas the media used to have that sole function, citizens themselves are becoming watchdogs not just of government but of media as well. They are becoming



watchdogs of the watchdogs.

"Blogs and podcasts not only pull media consumers away from the traditional media, in

loosened things up considerably already."

So perhaps, instead of being seen as a threat, citizen journalists and grassroots journalists

should be viewed as partners in elevating ideas to those

who hold power. Perhaps this is

precisely why people who hold

power perceive citizen journalists

as a threat. Could we be

headed toward a combination of mainstream and grassroots media, or are the two irreconcilably different?

Quo vadis?

Earlier, we heard bloggers and podcasters themselves declare that they are not journalists. However, we have also heard experts say that grassroots journalism enabled by technologies like blogging and podcasting should become or are already becoming part of mainstream media. Will journalists disappear? Where is all this headed?

A 2005 Pew Internet report (http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/144/report_display.asp) shows that while 27 percent of Internet users read blogs, 62 percent didn't know what a blog was. And so blogging is moving into the daily part of online information gathering. Readers do not need to know whether it is a blog or not—people just read them as they would any other source on the Web, without worrying about technical differences.

With this in mind, do blogging and podcasting have a chance of becoming viable sources of information in the future?

"Yes, but that's a qualified yes," said Orling of the Poynter Institute. "Within both blogging and podcasting are a wide range of users—from professional journalists using those new media tools, all the way down to teenagers blogging and podcasting for fun. But in between, there definitely are some non-journalists who are doing high-quality work, and some of it is quite credible. So, for readers and listeners of blogs and podcasts, it takes some analysis to figure out if they're reading or listening to a credible source. With most (not all) traditional media, you already have some assurance of credibility because of the existing brand name."

The Poynter Institute is helping spread the word about expression suppression worldwide. It has set up a dedicated Internet Freedom Desk and is issuing a Handbook for Bloggers and Cyber-dissidents to help the cause of free speech online. It has even institutionalized the "Freedom Blog Awards," which Malaysia's Jeff Ooi won last year.

The Poynter Institute has actively been conducting trainings on how to incorporate new media channels like blogging and podcasting into the mainstream. The idea is to harness views from the grassroots and lift that up to mainstream media for a wider, more established audience base.

Given that these journalists' organizations are now protecting new media expression, we are seeing the two worlds of grassroots expression and traditional media crossing paths. These organizations are giving due recognition to bloggers and podcasters.

"I expect mainstream media to become more personal and less corporate in reaction to the blogging and podcasting trends," said Steve Orling, senior editor at the Poynter Institute. "Also, more professional journalists who blog for traditional media companies are being allowed to publish without pre-publication editing. So blogging and podcasting have

FREE blog hosts like Blogger have made it easier for ordinary citizens without journalistic backgrounds to become their own reporters, editors and publishers rolled into one. But is this good or bad?

casters, as Meinardus explained.

"Editors safeguard professional standards. Many blogs and podcasts lack journalistic professionalism. I assume it will not take long and the market will sort out the blogosphere. Only the good ones with a clear message and an acceptable standard of presentation will survive and compete with traditional media."

Meinardus believes that traditional media will not disappear with the coming of newer forms of media.

"This is not the first time that we've heard of the approaching demise of traditional media," he said. "On more than one occasion, newspapers, radio and television have proven capable of adapting and surviving."

Curt Hopkins, director of the Committee to Protect Bloggers, shared the same thoughts.

"Journalism is work," said Hopkins. "It takes experience to figure out what the story is, how to research it and how to interview, how to write in the most effective manner. Journalism will not be replaced by blogging. It's too hard. But it has already been affected by it and augmented by it. There are bloggers who are essentially journalists, journalists who are bloggers and bloggers who tend toward journalism."

Just because one has access to new media, said Nokia vice president for multimedia Mauro Montanaro, it does not mean that the content will be better than the ones found in traditional media.

"The problem is that as barriers to entry are getting lower and more people are becoming reporters, it doesn't mean that the content is getting better," he said. "That's why we still need the professionalism in there when people start becoming reporters and cameramen on their own."

Old dog, new tricks

So traditional media has staying power and will not disappear because of the inherent shortcomings of new media, but perhaps the mainstream could also take some tips from new media on how to revitalize reporting. The strength of personal grassroots reports is that they offer views and perspectives that often differ from the tired, old and monolithic ways of TV, radio and newspaper reporting.

The traditional view is that immediacy is the most important ingredient in the news reporting concoction—whoever breaks the news first while retaining accuracy is the winner. But maybe people are looking for a different perspective aside from quick flash reports.

"I think there's 'newsflash fatigue' in the world," said media analyst Tyler Brule in an interview with CNN. "There's been a slight loss of sense of urgency now. People want to see not just breaking news but also a view of what happened the whole day. People want perspective and that's provided by people in the places where the news happens, so we have blogs and podcasts from this country or that, to give a local flavor of what truly happened. And without this perspective in TV we might see the death of the rolling 24-hour newscast."

These, according to Brule, are being done by new media and could be integrated into mainstream media to reinvigorate

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iBlog . . .

rate news reporting.

"The challenge is rethinking the game," he said. "The rolling 24-hour news channels are not limited by technology. There's also a question of targeting, but the problem is pretty much everyone is chasing the same angle. The likes of Yahoo! and Google aggregate all of these points of view and analyses coming from blogs so they offer a better overall view beyond the newsflash."

This kind of integration Brule referred to may already be happening as citizen journalism slowly becomes part of the mainstream. This would result in hybrid media that includes grassroots views aside from reports from traditional journalists. This may even be changing theories on communications flow altogether.

"New types of media will soon emerge," said Pain of the Reporters Without Borders. "I believe in the

From page 88

collaboration between mainstream media and citizen journalists. So far they compete. I hope that in the future they'll be able to work together, each one doing what he does best. We're at the beginning of a revolution for mainstream media. They have to catch the train of citizen journalism, or they'll be in serious trouble."

Going mainstream

Asked if he thought that five years from now, blogs and podcasts would become part of mainstream media, Pain replied:

"I hope so. But maybe in five years bloggers won't exist anymore. Blogs are just a form taken by citizen journalism at a certain point in time. Other forms of citizen journalism will probably emerge and overtake blogging and podcasting. That's what is so great with the Internet. It's evolving very fast."

(To be concluded next week)



Tech Support and Maintenance for SMBs:

Prevention and Cure

By Ricky Banay, Country Manager, Intel Microelectronics Philippines, Inc.

Investment in information technology by small and medium businesses (SMBs) in Asia is skyrocketing. After weathering the economic downturn, SMBs are now looking to grow their business using information technology (IT), with analysis predicting a remarkable increase of 19% in SMB technology spending in 2004.¹ However, buying hardware is only the first step. The way this technology is managed will greatly affect how profitable the investment will be.

Support and maintenance costs SMBs a great deal of time and money. According to Gartner, the purchase price of a new personal computer (PC) accounts for only 20 to 30 percent of the total cost of owning that PC, with the rest going to supporting and maintaining that hardware.² These support costs rise substantially for older systems, driving up the operational expenses that comprise most of the 70 to 80 percent of the total cost of owning a computer.

With IT investment surging and system complexity increasing, IT support is crucial to all businesses. System downtime often translates to lost business. So how should an SMB effectively manage its IT system?

The Quick Cure

When you're ill, you usually see a doctor. If you're technology shows symptoms of a ail, call your "digital doctor" or your IT vendor help desk. Below are some tips to assist the help desk technician assess and fix the problem:

Right problem, right person

The most important element to remember when talking to a helpdesk is patience. Just as your doctor takes time to walk through your symptoms before developing a diagnosis, help desk technicians must also walk through your system's symptoms. Try to be patient as the technician assesses your problem and identifies a solution.

Occasionally, the help desk technician may require a second opinion to accurately pin point the cause of the problem. Just as you would seek the advice of a medical specialist, don't be afraid to ask for assistance from a higher level engineer or manager if needed. It can sometimes save quite a bit of time.

Keep Detailed Logs

Like doctors keep records of your medical history, keep a record each of your technical problems and the solutions offered by the helpdesk. The effort spent documenting problems can help reduce the long-term costs of your system support as you will know how to resolve these problems if they arise again.

The Preventative Approach

No one likes being ill, which is why the healthcare concept of "prevention" rather than "cure" is growing in popularity. Most people would rather avoid getting sick, rather than visiting a doctor on a regular basis. Adopting a preventative approach also works for technology systems. In the case of technology, prevention starts with good technology planning. Below are a few considerations to help prevent system downtime and reduce maintenance costs.

Regular PC Replacement Program

Regardless of brand, your technology should be current. The optimum lifecycle is three years for a desktop PC and two years for notebooks. Beyond this timeframe, maintenance and upgrades can cost more than replacing the entire PC.³ It may sound strange, but without scheduling regular updates, companies tend to practice a "crash and burn" approach to IT maintenance. By replacing computers only when they fail, they not only miss out on the productivity gains of more current computers, but they also wind up with dozens of different hardware configurations and out-of-date software, costing more in ongoing incompatibilities long term. Orchestrating technical support for such a haphazard system will be a full time job, even if you only have a few of these aging computers.

Q: Why buy the best PC I can afford?

A: A sufficiently powerful, balanced system allows multitasking to operate effectively. For example, PCs equipped with the latest technologies such as the Intel Pentium® D processor enables users to multitask and process background tasks more efficiently. With two processor cores, a PC can handle more applications or programs at one time. This means, more system maintenance, such as virus software, backup and indexing, can occur while you are doing work, which means less time spent on the phone trying to fix problems.

Because aging computers can't handle complex applications, they can be a huge IT burden. This sidetracks you from your core business responsibilities and increases maintenance overhead, leading to a more complex and costly system. The older the PC, the more costs accumulate. Time, human resources and component parts are required with repairs can be expensive.

Keeping your system simple

Keeping your system simple by standardizing hardware can save you time and money. If you have multiple systems, it's easier to troubleshoot them if they are all the same. If you need to troubleshoot the same problem of your PCs from different manufacturers

Conclusion

Managing an IT system should be looked at as an opportunity to increase efficiency and reduce costs. The potential benefits cannot be underestimated. A study in the U.S. found that 93% of all companies had lost their data for 0 days or years prior to bankruptcy within one year of the disaster. A company that is unable to maintain its IT system's integrity, a little downtime can be all the time your competitors need to move in. But with these simple maintenance techniques, you will be ahead of the game.

4/4/06

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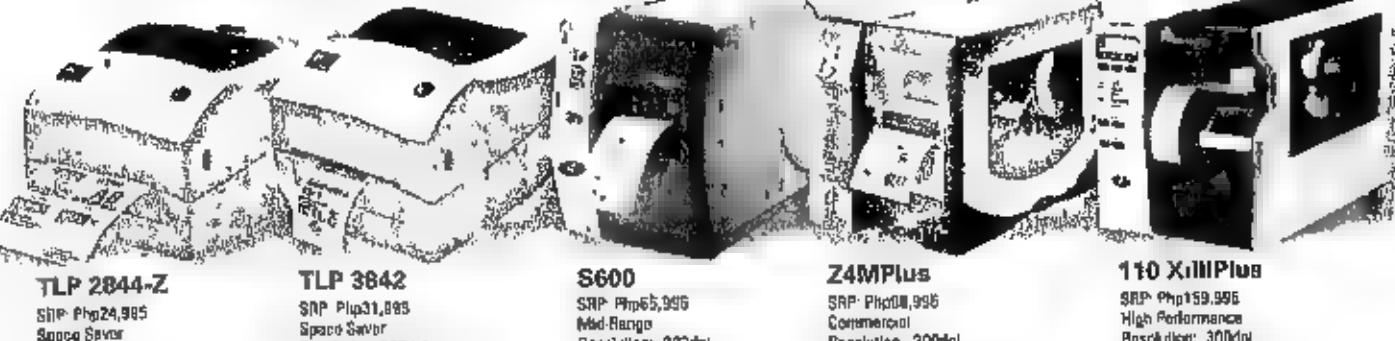
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The property to be disposed is a Cebu City owned lot with a land area of exactly Forty Six Thousand Three Hundred Forty Five (46,345) square meters located at General Maxilom Avenue, North Reclamation Area (currently occupied by the city's Department of Public Services), covered by TCT No. T-2449.

Sale will be through public bidding. Minimum bid price is Twelve Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P12,500.00) per square meter.

All bids must be accompanied by a bid bond in the form of cash or Manager's Check in an amount equivalent to twenty (20%) of the bid amount. Bidders bond of all losing bids shall be returned when the award is decided.

All particulars relative the Bid Security, Evaluation of Bids and Award shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of COA Circular 82-386, Rules and Regulations on Supply and Property Management in the Local Governments.

The schedule of activities is as follows:

Activities	March 15-30, 2006	City Admin. Office
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI)	March 15-30, 2006	City Admin. Office
2. Issuance of Bid Documents	March 15-30, 2006	City Admin. Office
3. Site Inspection	March 31, 2006, 8-12 PM	
4. Pre-Bid Conference	March 31, 2006, 2:00 PM	City Admin. Office
5. Receipt and Opening of Bids	April 11, 2006, 3:00 PM	City Admin. Office

The Committee on Awards will issue Bidding Documents to bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Php 10,000.00 to the Cebu City Cashier.

The City Government of Cebu assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

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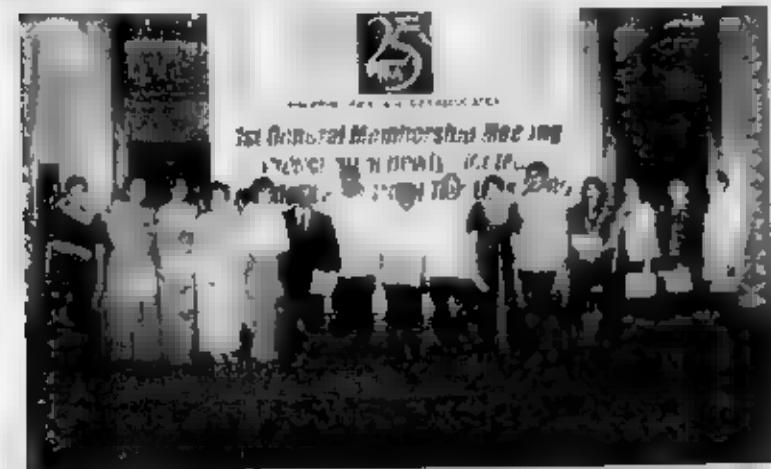
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DOLE: 750,000 new jobs improve employment level in January

ACTING LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT SECRETARY MANUEL B. IMSON reported that the country's employment situation markedly improved in January 2006 as the total employment volumes nationwide rose by 750,000 compared with the same period last year. Imson, in a memorandum to President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, said that this translates to an employment growth of 2.4 percent, "which is a big improvement from the marginal growth rate of only 0.3 percent posted in 2004." Complementing the local employment growth, the Acting Labor Chief said that the DOLE's optimized marketing efforts earlier resulted in the global deployment, in 2005, of 985,383 overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), or a growth rate of 5.87 percent (54,795) compared to 933,588 in 2004. Imson apprised the President that employment growth was recorded strongest in the combined agriculture, fishery and forestry sector while employment in the services sector also posted growth. Services employment, he said, posted a 373,000 increase with all sectors registering positive employment growth, a recovery from last year's slump (0.2%). The growth in services employment was highest in private households with employed persons at 102,000, followed by wholesale and retail trade (85,000), education (58,000), and real estate, renting, and business activities (44,000). He added that all but five regions posted growth in employment with the highest observed in Region IV-A at 163,000 followed by Regions XI and VII at 102,000 and 65,000, respectively.

Imson noted that the employment gains in agriculture and services offset the slight 1.8 percent decline registered in the industry sector attributed mainly to the seasonal slump in construction activity.

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- Not more than 30 years of age

2 FIELD INSPECTOR ENGINEERS

- Male, Graduate or Undergraduate in Civil Engineering
- With technical know how in actual measurements
- Must know how to drive motorcycle, and with valid driver's license
- Not more than 27 years of age

1 MECHANICAL ENGINEER

- Male, Graduate or Undergraduate in Mechanical Engineering
- Working experience in machinery

CALL: Tel. 8951830 / 8967435

MANILA GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB, INC.

HARVARD ROAD, FORBES PARK, MAKATI CITY

March 20, 2006

NOTICE OF AUCTION SALE

TO ALL MEMBERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC:

The Bidding Committee of Manila Golf and Country Club, Inc., hereby announces the auction sale of the following described property:

- One (1) individual proprietary membership certificate.
- One (1) corporate proprietary membership certificate.

Any interested party may submit his/its written bid beginning today until 4:00 p.m., March 31, 2006 to the Office of the Club's General Manager

The bid shall be subject to the following conditions:

- Minimum bid of P11,500,000.00 for individual proprietary membership certificate.
- Minimum bid of P12,000,000.00 for corporate proprietary membership certificate.
- Bids shall be accompanied by manager's check equivalent to 20% of the bid price payable to the Manila Golf and Country Club, Inc. and the balance within three (3) days from notice of bid acceptance.
- Exemption from the transfer fee of P300,000.00.
- Certificates will be issued immediately upon receipt of full payment and documentary stamp taxes.

(Sgd.) CESAR C. CRUZ
Chairman, Bidding Committee

(PD) March 28, 2006

APOLLO MINERAL RESOURCES INC.

10th flr. 10th flr. Strata 100 Building,
F. Ortigas Jr. Avenue (Formerly Emerald Avenue),
Ortigas Center, Pasig City
Tel. No. 810-8012; 836-0526; 837-2787

NOTICE OF SPECIAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A SPECIAL MEETING OF ALL STOCKHOLDERS OF APOLLO MINERAL RESOURCES, INC., will be held on 18 April 2006 in the afternoon at Unit B, 11th Floor, Strata 100 Building, F. Ortigas Jr. Avenue (Formerly Emerald Avenue), Ortigas Center, Pasig City, to discuss the winding up of the business affairs of the corporation.

When registering your attendance at the aforementioned special stockholders' meeting, please present any valid form of identification such as company I.D., passport or driver's license.

If you cannot personally attend the meeting and would like to be represented by a Proxy a written and signed copy of the Proxy must be received by the undersigned not later than April 7, 2006. In case of a corporation, the Proxy must be signed by duly authorized officer.

Pasig City, March 16, 2006.

(Sgd.) ELENA T. PEREZ
Acting Corporate Secretary

(PD) March 28, 2006 & Apr. 3, 2006

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

In compliance with PCAB Rules and Regulations governing the accreditation of contractors, notice is hereby given that DSB CONSTRUCTION & SUPPLY owned by DANTE S. BOMBALES has changed its Business Name to DSB CONSTRUCTION & SUPPLY, INC. with business address at Magaysay Avenue, Bacolod, Albay. Following are the Board of Directors and Members of DSB Construction and Supply, Inc.

President
DANTE S. BOMBALES
Treasurer in Trust
ROSIARIO R. BOMBALES
Secretary
MA. CORAZON B. ROMANO
Board Members:
NIKKI ANDREA R. BOMBALES
REGINDA R. BARCENAS

(PD) March 26, 2006

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722-1144 or 722-1155

He said that electricity, gas and water sub-sector remained a bright spot after posting a five percent growth in employment from 128,000 in 2005 to 133,000 in January 2006.

"Occupation-wise, the share of the laborers and unskilled workers posted the biggest increase both in levels and percent share with 382,000 and 0.46 percent point, respectively," Imson further said.

A total of 12 services and industry sub-sectors, along with the agriculture sector, accounted for the 750,000 employment increment posted nationwide this January, Imson said.

2nd Dr. Rodrigo B. Floro Memorial Cup

THE ASIAN HOSPITAL GOLF CLUB HEADED BY ITS PRESIDENT, DR. Hermogenes Villareal, will be having the 2nd Dr. Rodrigo B. Floro Memorial Cup on Wednesday, March 22 at the Palmer Course of the Orchard Golf and Country Club, Gen. E. Aguinaldo Km. 27 Highway, Dasmarinas, Cavite. A charitable event in memory and honor of the late Dr. Rodrigo B. Floro, who served as the first medical director of the Asian Hospital and Medical Center (2002-2004), the memorial cup is envisioned to continue to help the various charitable projects which Dr. Floro started during his time, among which are, the Tuloy sa Don Bosco Foundation and the Annual Medical/Surgical/Dental Mission to Aklan, as well as assistance to the Asian Hospital Charities. Registration is on March 22 from 8:00 to 9:30 AM at the main lobby of The Orchard. Shot-Gun Tee-Off will start at 10:00 AM. Among the giveaways and raffle prizes during the awarding ceremonies at 5:00 PM are two Hole-In-One Roundtrip Business Class Tickets to the United States courtesy of Asiana Airlines. For more information and for pre-tournament flight arrangements, interested parties may call golf directors Dr. Ike Mendoza at 0917-6203900 or Dr. Marc Reyes at 0917-5311911.

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B6, B11 & B12

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Incentives for new cement projects sought

Additional capacity needed to meet increasing demand

By Ronnel W. Domingo

A GROUP OF REAL ESTATE developers and contractors are pushing for the entry of more cement factories in a bid to bring down prices of their most important input.

Pedro C. Tario, president of the Chamber of Real Estate Builders Association, said his group was in favor of enticing new players in the cement industry by including it in the list of preferred sectors qualified for incentives under the government's Investments Priorities Plan.

"We are hopeful that such a move would result in more stable prices of cement in the near future," Tario said.

He said Creba members have been forced to absorb very steep increases in cement prices over the past three years. The price of 40-kilogram bag cement rose to a range of P150 to P170 from only about P70 in 2002.

Creba was reacting to reports that cement manufacturing projects might be able to enjoy incentives again as the government was considering the inclusion of these ventures in the IPP Cement manufacturing used to be in the

IPP but was delisted three years ago because of excess production capacity.

The government started considering its inclusion in the list again after data showed the possibility of production falling short of the fast-growing demand for cement.

Projections in the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan for 2004-2010 indicate that the construction industry's demand for cement would grow at an average of 12 percent a year, which means demand could reach 468 million bags in 2010, which is higher than the existing production capacity of 462 million bags.

But Tario said the shortage situation was already evident despite claims of the Cement Manufacturers Association of the Philippines about current capacity and demand.

"How can selling prices be at historic highs when demand is weak and there is alleged overcapacity in the industry?" the Creba chief asked.

Tario said the government should look into the matter of the "true domestic supply situation" and not rely on reported numbers from existing manufacturers.

BSP issues tougher

From page B1

was in line with the BSP's recent moves to tighten its own policy as a lender of last resort in dealing with banks or with the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp.

Tatangco said problem banks with an existing MoA with the BSP on prompt corrective action would have a better chance of getting emergency liquidity or any other government-supported assistance.

Another BSP official said the PCA

framework would work on a case-by-case basis. A major departure from the BSP's old tack was that a different set of criteria had now been set to determine what would trigger the enforcement of PCA.

"The enforcement of PCA, in the past, was limited to undercapitalization," the official said. "Now it will consider other factors, recognized under international standards, that affect the viability of an entity."

Doris C. Duran

RE-BIDDING FOR THE LEASE OF ADDITIONAL WAREHOUSE (FOR THE USE OF MOTOR POOL AND SUPPLY UNITS)

The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth), through the Corporate Operating Budget (COB) 2006, intends to apply the sum of Pph4,328,696.89 being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Lease for two (2) years of Additional Warehouse for the use of the Motor Pool and Supply Units. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

PhilHealth now invites Bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Bidding for the Lease of Additional Warehouses for the use of the Motor Pool and Supply Units, with the following specifications:

1. Location

The location of the warehouse shall be within one (1) kilometer radius from the Citystate Centre. The area must not be subject to flooding.

2. Basic Requirements

2.1. Floor Area 1,000 sq.m. to 1,200 sq.m. It may be a single unit, or two (2) separate units with a total area of 1,000 sq.m. to 1,200 sq.m.
2.2. Flooring, Concrete Finish
2.3. Electricity With power supply and serviceable electrical lighting
2.4. Water Supply & Drainage System With water supply and existing working drainage system
2.5. Office Space With existing office space (enclosed structure)

3. Other Conditions

3.1. Free moving-in for a period of thirty (30) days.
3.2. Major repair shall be undertaken by the lessor.
3.3. Title must be free from liens and encumbrances.
3.4. Lessor guarantees peaceful, quiet and uninterrupted use of the premises, with full beneficial use of the leased premises.
3.5. Repair and washing of vehicles shall be allowed at least in the one-half portion of the warehouse.
3.6. The lessor shall perform the following:
3.6.1. Termite Control once a year
3.6.2. Pest and Rodent Control every three (3) months

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary general criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of the Republic Act 8184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino Citizens/Sole Proprietors, organizations with at least fifty percent (50%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws of regulation of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino Citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 8183 and subject to Commonwealth Act 136. Only Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finely determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such after the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the Office of the Secretariat for the Bids and Awards Committee (OSBAC) in the Central Office of PhilHealth, Room 1107, 11th Floor Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Blvd., Pasig City, and inspect the Bidding Documents from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from March 15 to 29, 2006 at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Pph3,000.00 cash. The prospective Bidder or his authorized representative shall receive the Bidding Documents personally.

PhilHealth will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on March 31, 2006 at 10:30 a.m. at the OSBAC Conference Room (Rm. 1106), PhilHealth Central Office, 11th Floor Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Blvd., Brgy. Ortigas, Pasig City.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the OSBAC Conference Room on or before April 17, 2006, 10:30 a.m. The official time shall be based on the wall clock located at the OSBAC Conference Room. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on April 17, 2006, 10:30 a.m. at OSBAC Conference Room. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.

PhilHealth shall require the prospective bidders to submit copy of contracts within the relevant period of CY 2004 and CY 2005 whether ongoing, completed or awarded but not yet started.

PhilHealth reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the

Office of the Secretariat for the Bids and Awards Committee in the Central Office
Mr. Joseph D. Vargara
Rm. 1107, 11th Floor Citystate Centre
709 Shaw Blvd., Brgy. Ortigas, Pasig City
Tel. (02) 637-9999 locals 1128, 1130 and 1830
e-mail: osbac@philhealth.gov.ph
Fax: (02) 637-4735
www.philhealth.gov.ph

(Sgd.) Atty. VALENTIN C. GIANICO
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee for Goods and Services
(PDI-March 13 & 20, 2006)

Let's cancel our Newsweek subscriptions

IN THE MARCH 6 ISSUE OF Newsweek, reporters Marites Vitug and Joe Cochrane wrote in the Perscope section: "Indeed, the Philippines remains so impoverished that the very middle class that's expected to nurture political pluralism is actually shrinking."

This incredible sentence is not a quote from a report of the census bureau or any of the absurd opinion survey firms that abound in Manila. By itself, Newsweek figured out that the middle class is shrinking.

Newsweek did not say whether an expansion of the lower class caused the shrinkage, or some of the middle class sank to the lower class and/or rose to the upper crust.

How did Newsweek compute the shrinkage? How many noses were counted? How many income tax returns were examined? What crystal ball was used?

We only have to look around us to dispute Newsweek. If you drive up north of Manila on the main highway, you will see fields planted to rice, corn, sugar cane and tobacco. If you drive south to Bicol, you will also see coconut plantations and citrus groves heavy with fruit.

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

Since the daytime traffic is clogged with cargo trucks, people prefer to travel at night. When I was in Davao two years ago, the sprawling banana plantations were still there. My guess is the Visayans are thriving as well.

This impoverished country spends more on education than national defense. This has been the unwavering government policy since before World War II.

Today, over 21 million—fully one-fourth of the population—and more than the population of Australia, are in school. This is unmatched in the Third World and, I suspect, in most of the First.

Our colleges and universities can accommodate quite comfortably the entire population of Singapore. Every year, half a million men and women earn college diplomas on a dizzying array of disciplines.

In government schools, education up to high school is tuition free. Private schools, especially Catholic schools, buttress the vast educational system.

they send another \$15 billion a year. (Only the migrant workers of India and Mexico send more money home.)

Out of school youth is still a problem, but an improving economy should bring this problem down.

Because of our universal educational system, eight million (almost 10 percent of the population) Filipinos find lucrative work abroad. There is no hospital in the US that does not have a Filipino doctor and nurse.

Filipino engineers are building roads and bridges in Afghanistan. A quarter of a million Filipino able seamen man ocean-going vessels, including American aircraft carriers.

The Filipino woman has been making her mark abroad. More countries are discovering the fine Filipino nurse. President Clinton's personal lady physician at the White House was a Filipino. After his recent heart bypass operation, a Filipino nurse took care of him at the ICU. Now, the first lady chef at the White House is a Filipino.

These overseas Filipino workers send back to their impoverished country \$10 billion a year through the banking system. Through unofficial conduits,

they send another \$15 billion a year. (Only the migrant workers of India and Mexico send more money home.)

This cold cash is spent on new homes, education for the kids, insurance policies and to splurge at Star City.

In multinational firms, Filipinos now occupy senior executive positions that used to be the exclusive preserve of expatriate foreigners.

Our impoverished country has a vibrant life insurance industry. The Insurance Commission reports that, in the five-year period ending 2003, new policies increased by an unprecedented average of about 34 percent yearly. The top life insurance firms continue to post record sales.

This is the best indicator that the middle class is actually expanding.

Of course, poverty still stalks the land. Two blocks from my house is a squatter colony. Every day, I pass by the hovels along the railroad tracks. But, I have no doubt that more and more gutsy, Filipinos are scratching their way out of poverty than ever before.

I wrote Newsweek that I was not renewing my subscription. How about you?

Gov't to raise ...

From page B1

the government currently gets 58 centavos from the domestic market and 42 centavos from foreign sources such as commercial sovereign bond floats and official development assistance (ODA) loans from multilateral agencies.

"We don't know yet what the new

ratio will be," a DBCC source said. "It's now under study by the BSP."

The source said the government would likely cut down on foreign commercial bond issuances this year instead of giving up cheaper ODA lending windows from foreign donors.

For the rest of the year, the government has to raise another \$900 million to complete its planned borrowing of \$3.1 billion from foreign commercial sources.

"If we borrow in pesos, the better for us because the peso is strong," said another source from the BSP. "The government should even prepay some commercial foreign loans."

The BSP last week announced the planned prepayment of \$500 million worth of debts in April or six months ahead of maturity, taking advantage of the historic rise in the country's gross international reserves.

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PC Live 834-2438

PC Center Cebu 733-1716

Digital Interface 834-2156

Computer World Marketing (02) 722-8131

Cebu Techlink Trade (02) 294-2232

3. C. Comp (02) 367-6153 to 57

Panasonic launches clearest camera phones

PANASONIC MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS CO LTD presents two new cutting edge high-definition camera phones—the VS6 and VS7—that are literally setting the new standards in the mobile phone industry.

*With the VS6's super slim clamshell design,

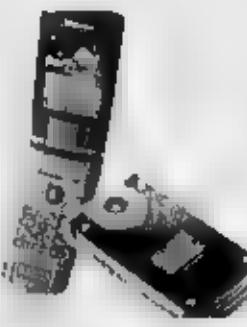
the 2.0 mega-pixel camera boasts of fine quality photographs and movies. It is supported by a high-definition 2.2-inch QVGA screen with an outstanding brightness of 300 candela/m²; this means that it is up to 50 percent brighter than other handsets in the market and

offers images that seem to leap out to life! The 16 million colors on its screen brings up the VS6 as one of the most technically advanced screen technology in the market today.

The built-in 2.0 mega-pixel, 5x

digital zoom camera comes with a 15-frame continuous shooting function, which is perfect for snapshots taken in quick succession. The camera also allows the user to take close-up shots of subjects with crisp, sharp images. The VS6 has

PANASONIC VS7 One push auto open features



32MB of built-in memory for storing the photos and in addition to the impressive camera function, the handset has video capability, allowing users to capture and playback video footage with sound. The VS6 comes with Bluetooth wireless technology allowing users to share images and video clips effortlessly and also enjoy wire-free connectivity when using a Bluetooth handsfree headset.

The VS6 just weighs 101g and is only 21mm thin. The "one push auto open" function provides quick and easy access to all of the VS6's functions. Users can enjoy real music ringtones as well as interactive gaming with 3D games and Java is supported for you to download more. The VS6 is a GPRS tri-band phone that can support up to eight hours of talk time or a standby time of up to 430 hours. It is available in a sleek black color.

Brightest screen

The latest star to shine among Panasonic's state-of-the-art mobile phones, of course, is VS7. An upgraded version of the VS6, the VS7 has the brightest and clearest screen to date with its high-performance large 2.5-inch color TFT screen. It features a 240 x 320 pixels QVGA resolution enhanced to approximately 16 million colors and a brightness that goes as high as 300 candela/m². Capture portraits or your favorite moments through its digital camera with video recording and be impressed by its screen, which depicts images that always look remarkably true to life! You can also read the very clear screen in almost all kinds of lighting situations. Even better, the VS7 is MP3-capable so you can download ringtones using this feature.

It is also equipped with the same impressive 2.0 megapixel resolution. Its back-light compensation ensures every image captured and shown on screen is very clear. With the help of the 5x Zoom function, just zoom in to wonderfully capture every detail.

The VS7 features Bluetooth connectivity as well. The VS7 comes equipped with high-speed GPRS that connects you to the Internet with ease. Other interesting features include its clamshell design, external color screen, and changeable faceplates. The front LCD shows incoming or missed calls, even SMS. You can even read your new text messages without flipping the phone to open, simply press the scroll button to read the SMS.

For more information on Panasonic VS6 and VS7, check the website of Panasonic Mobile Communications Co Ltd at www.panasonic.co.jp/pmc/en.

Republic of the Philippines
TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
East Service Rd., South Superhighway, Taguig, Metro Manila

Resolution No. 2005-18

APPROVING THE PROVISIONAL ASSESSMENT FEES BY QUALIFICATION

WHEREAS, during the 46th TESDA Board Meeting held last 19 May 2005 TESDA Board members approved Board Resolution No. 2005-07 "The Adoption of the Guidelines in the Implementation of the Philippine TVET Qualification and Certification System;

WHEREAS, Section 7 of the Guidelines in the Implementation of the Philippine TVET Qualification and Certification Systems provides that "Assessment fees shall be based on the cost of supplies and materials as well as administrative expenses including assessor's honoraria, power and utilities, depreciation and maintenance costs. Assessment Fees shall be subject to change to allow for any possible adjustments due to costs increases."

WHEREAS, during the 11th Finance TESDA Board-TESDA Secretariat Consultation Meeting which was held 14 October 2005, the cost of Assessment Fees by Qualification were deliberated and favorably recommended for consideration of the EXCOM-TESDA Board;

WHEREAS, during the 44th EXCOM-TESDA Board Meeting held 27 October 2005 the EXCOM-TESDA Board endorsed favorably the list of assessment fees by qualification for a period of six (6) months pilot implementation,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the Board approves the provisional assessment fees by qualification for a period of six (6) months subject to evaluation of its pilot implementation and submission of its findings and recommendations;

BE IT RESOLVED FINALLY, that copies of the Resolution hard and soft copies of Provisional Assessment Fees by Qualification schedule be disseminated to all concerned.

Adopted this 10th day of November 2005.

(Sgd.) MR. ELMER K. TALAVERA
Executive Director, Planning Office
Officer-In-Charge, TESDA Board Secretariat

Attested by:

(Sgd.) SECRETARY AUGUSTO BOBOY SYJUCO
Alternate Chair, TESDA Board
Director General, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority

(Sgd.) SECRETARY PATRICIA A. STO. TOMAS
Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE)
Chair, TESDA Board

(PDI—March 19 & 20, 2006)



STANDARD CHARTERED BANK, PLDT INK CONTRACT

Standard Chartered Bank, the first operating foreign bank and the second longest established bank in the Philippines, recently signed a contract with PLDT for various corporate products and services. Shown seated from left are Narissa Ramos, PLDT FVP and head of corporate business solutions; Ernesto Alberto, PLDT SVP and head of corporate business group; Eugenia Ellis, Standard Chartered Bank IT AVP,

Standard Chartered Bank chief executive officer and Nilda Causing Standard Chartered Bank country operating officer. Standing, from left, are Ginny Tacoloy, PLDT relationship manager; Katrina Luna-Abelarde, PLDT AVP and business head; Rufino Villaluna, Standard Chartered Bank country technology manager and Dave Medei, Standard Chartered Bank IT AVP.

AMENDMENT TO THE AMENDED MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

DATED FEBRUARY 14, 2006 DEFINING THE GUIDELINES ON
TRANSFERABILITY OF TAX CREDIT CERTIFICATES ISSUED
UNDER EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 226, THE OMNIBUS INVESTMENT CODE

Pursuant to Section 9 of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) dated October 13, 2000 executed by and between the Board of Investments (BOI) and the Department of Finance (DOF) in compliance with the provision of Article 21 of Executive Order No. 226 (E.O. 226) regarding the transferability of tax credit certificates (TCCs) issued under said E.O., the following additional guidelines are hereby adopted:

1. Transfers by companies belonging to a distressed industry sector:

Transferees belonging to an industry sector which BOI has assessed to be in distress shall be allowed to transfer their outstanding TCCs to any BOI registered transferees and government financial institutions without requiring them to comply with the conditions imposed under Section 1c, 1e and 1f of the prevailing MOA, provided that this type of transfer shall be allowed for one year only from official notification to the Center by BOI that the industry sector is in distress, without prejudice to renewal thereof upon approval by the Executive Committee.

2. Section 9 of the MOA is hereby amended to include the following paragraph:

"Henceforth, in order to simplify the administrative process in amending the existing MOA, and since BOI and DOF are well represented in the Center's Excom, any amendment to the prevailing MOA including exceptions to the guidelines for meritorious consideration shall now be done through a resolution duly approved by the Center's Executive Committee which resolution shall be for implementation without the need for another MOA between BOI and DOF, subject to compliance with the provisions of EO 226 and with the required administrative procedures under the Administrative Code."

(Sgd.) PETER B. FAVILA
Secretary
Department of Trade & Industry

(Sgd.) MARGARITO B. TEVES
Secretary
Department of Finance

Signed in the presence of:

(Sgd.) ELMER C. HERNANDEZ
Undersecretary
Board of Investments

(Sgd.) GAUDENCIO A. MENDOZA, JR.
Undersecretary
DSS-CENTER

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION
CITY OF MANILA

SUBSCRIBED AND SWEORN to before me this 09 day of MARCH, 2006 in the City of Manila, affianc exhibited to me their Community Tax Certificates as follows:

NAME CTC NUMBER
MARGARITO B. TEVES 14026438
PETER B. FAVILA 20564950

ISSUED AT ISSUED ON
Makati 02-02-06
2-24-06

IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my notarial seal for the day, year, and place above written.

Doc. No. 188
Page No. 39
Book No. XI
Series of 2006

(Sgd.) ATTY. JOAQUIN M. CHUA
NOTARY PUBLIC MANILA
COMMISSION EXPIRES: DEC 31, 2006
P.T.R. NO. 3721596-1-31-05 M.L.A.
ROLL OF ATTORNEY NO. 25262
I.P.R. NO. 595078-1-25-05

(PDI—March 13, 20 & 27, 2006)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES Department of Education REGIONAL OFFICE NO. VIII Government Center, Candelaria, Palo, Leyte



INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Education, Regional Office No. VIII through the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for

eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereinunder contract.

CLUSTER NUMBER	NAME OF CONTRACT	LOCATION	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT	CONTRACT DURATION
Cluster I	1) Completion of School Buildings (2nd Phase) 2) Construction of 2 classroom sch. bldg (7m x 8m)	Catarman Spad Center, Catarman, N. Samar Maydolong NHS Maydolong, E. Samar	965,000.00 1,644,000.00	
TOTAL			2,609,000.00	180 CD
Cluster II	1) Construction of 2 cl School Bldg. (7m x 8m) 2) Construction of 2 cl School Bldg. (7m x 8m) 3) Construction of 2 cl School Bldg. (7m x 7m)	Ybellez, E.S. Tabango, Leyte Comprehensive NHS Lib-og PS Meaun City	772,000.00 772,000.00 807,950.00	
TOTAL			2,351,950.00	180 CD

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC and have key personnel and equipment (listed in the Eligibility Form) available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bids.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

BAC ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application of Eligibility & Issuance of Eligibility Forms	March 28 – April 11, 2006
2. Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	March 28 – April 12, 2006
3. Notice of Results of Eligibility Check	April 19, 2006
4. Issuance of Bid Documents	April 20 – April 27, 2006
5. Pre-Bid Conference	May 19, 2006, 2:00 p.m.
6. Receipt and Opening of Bids	May 31, 2006, 2:00 p.m.

The BAC will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility forms at DepEd RO 8, Government Center, Candelaria, Palo, Leyte, upon their submission of a LOI, prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility requirements to the DepEd RO 8 at the said address. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same address.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of PHP1,000.00 to the DepEd RO 8 Cashier.

The DepEd RO 8 assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) ATTY. ALBERTO T. ESCOBARTE
OIC-Assistant Regional Director
BAC Chairman

The Bank reserves the right to reject any and all bids, annul the bidding process, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For further inquiries, please call telephone numbers 8125702 / 8189811 loc. 2810.

Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI—March 14 & 28, 2006)

BUSINESS

Mindanao posts rise in foreign, domestic tourist arrivals

DAVAO CITY—DESPITE PERCEIVED SECURITY threats in the South, foreign tourist arrivals in Mindanao grew 7 percent to 141,877 last year, the Mindanao Development Council (Medco) said in a paper.

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ROBINSONS LAND CORPORATION



Where parents' money will go this June

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

THERE IS A DEBATE in management circles on whether or not a person should pursue an MBA.

Up until the 1980s, a master's degree in business administration was a must-have to go up the corporate ladder.

In the 1990s, the adequacy of an MBA degree to make a CEO adapt to changes in the business environment were doubted. Firms began looking for executives with entrepreneurial skills.

But this debate only affects a small segment of the population.

The concern of the majority has to do with their children's chances of completing their elementary, high school and college education.

The continuous rise of tuition fees for all segments, both public and private, has remained a major financial challenge for today's parents. And this coming school year is not likely to be an exception.

And what happened to the pre-needed firms College Assurance Plan and Pacific Plans was no help to parents at all.

INQUIRER'S BusinessMonday takes a look at the cost of education in the Philippines. The rates on the table may have changed by the time the article is printed. The final cost may also differ, depending on whether miscellaneous fees—as well as the cost of uniforms and books—are included.

Treat the figures as rough estimates that will guide you when you prepare for the new school year.

PRE-SCHOOL	ELEMENTARY	HIGH SCHOOL	COLLEGE
Manresa School Parañaque City Kindergarten: P37,000 to P38,000	Manresa School Parañaque City Grade V - P44,124.00 Grade III - P 36,228.95	Caloocan City 4th year HS - P52,000 plus (including books and miscellaneous)	SCHOOL COST PER UNIT ESTIMATED TUITION FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR AMA Computer University P760.00 P41,040.00 Ateneo de Manila University P2,053.40 P73,922.40 Colegio de San Juan de Letran P711.00 P29,862.00 College of the Holy Spirit, Manila P903.91 P37,964.22 De La Salle University *P1,752.50 P95,175.00 Far Eastern University P924.00 P38,808.00 FEU - East Asia College *P972.50 P61,267.50 Lyceum of the Philippines P728.00 P29,120.00 Mapua Institute of Technology P1,292.00 P56,848.00 Miriam College P1,290.00 P54,180.00 Philippine Women's University P720.00 P64,800.00 Polytechnic University of the Phils. P12,00 P504.00 San Beda College P900.00 P48,600.00 San Sebastian College P700.00 P42,000.00 St. Paul College of Quezon City P862.05 P46,550.70 St. Scholastica's College P1,335.60
Betty's Bellarmine Kindergarten School Makati City P23,575	Colegio de San Agustin Makati City Grade 1 - P61,646.00 Grade 6 - P66,958.00	Colegio de San Agustin Makati City 1st year HS - P 74,162 4th year HS - P76,936	Immaculate Heart of Mary School Parañaque City 1st year HS - P42,795.94 4th year HS - P52,117.70
Child Learning Center Makati City P32,000 - P36,000	Colegio de Sta. Rosa Makati City Grade 1 and Grade 6, P32,846.53 (tuition)	Colegio de Sta. Rosa Makati City 1st year HS - P34,032.58 4th year HS - P36,645.65	Lourdes School of Mandaluyong P36,419.84
Child Star International Makati City P120,000 (estimate)	Jose Rizal University Mandaluyong Grade 1 - P12,830 Grade 6 - P19,950	Jose Rizal University 1st Year - P16,500 4th Year - P17,660	Lourdes School of Mandaluyong P35,047.57
Beacon School Taguig-Pateros Source: Website P 117,000 plus (tuition and other fees)	Dominican School Manila Grade 1 - P24,000 (tuition and other fees)	San Beda College 1st year HS - P57,000	Immaculate Heart of Mary School Parañaque City 1st year HS - P51,000
San Jose Academy Malabon P12,621.05	Grade 6 - P29,000 (tuition and other fees)	San Beda College 1st year HS - P51,000	Trinity College of Quezon City P741.00 P31,122.00
Jose Rizal University Mandaluyong P11,560	MSH Sisters School About P18,000	Xavier School San Juan 1st year HS - P 26,098 4th year HS - P29,220	University of Asia and the Pacific *P2,018.00 P108,972.00
MSH Sisters School Marikina Approximately P16,000	Grade 3 - P 42,263 (tuition) and P5,140 (miscell.)	Xavier School San Juan Grade 1 - P 73,625 (tuition) Grade 6 - P 64,872 (tuition)	University of Santo Tomas P699.20 P37,768.40 University of the East P76 P35,190.00
	Beacon School Taguig-Pateros Kinder to Grade 5 - P153,000 plus (tuition and other fees)	Beacon School Taguig-Pateros Grade 6 to Grade 8 - P185,000. plus (tuition and other fees)	University of the Philippines Diliman P300.00 P10,800.00 * Average cost per unit charged among the various rates depending on the course SOURCES: THE SCHOOLS ACCOUNTING, ADMINIS- TRATION, MARKETING, COMMUNICATIONS, REGIS- TRARS AND TREASURERS OFFICES

Programs:
B.S. Entrepreneurship
B.S. Business Administration with
concentrations in Family Business,
Creative Enterprise, and Social En-
trepreneurship

Tuition costs for Filipino nationals
Average tuition per term P42,000
Duration: 3-year program-trimester

Scholarships:
On Feb. 23, 2006, the Philippine
Center for Entrepreneurship (PCE) and
the Entrepreneurs School of Asia (ESA)
launched the Gen-E Presidential
Scholarship on Entrepreneurship.
While most scholarships are either
based on academic or athletic excel-
lence, Gen-E is focused on the
individual's entrepreneurial potential.
Ten full-college scholarships and several
regional partial scholarships are being
offered to 4th year private and public
high school students who exemplify the
following entrepreneurial traits of crea-
tivity, innovativeness, risk-takers,
hard-workers, leaders and resourcefulness.

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Adamson University
MBA - P1,500 per unit
Ateneo Graduate School of Business
MBA - P8,000 per subject
Colegio de San Juan de Letran
MBA - P915 per unit
De La Salle University Manila
MBA/Law Program - 14 units
P35,000 plus
Asian Institute of Management
MBA program - \$12,000 / year
MM program - \$14,000 / year
Grants and scholarships are available.
The A.M. Master in Entrepreneurship
program is 18 months and tuition
is asset based
Small enterprise P1.5 million
Tuition is: P380,000
Medium enterprise P16- P60 million
Tuition is: P445,000
Large enterprise P61 million up
Tuition is: P510,000

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Microsoft

Education remains an elusive dream in Luzon

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk
and Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

(First of a series)

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—THE MONTH of March brings relief and worry to Edna Manaloto.

Her relief comes from seeing her daughter hurdle the fifth grade. But already, this 46-year-old mother of two is worrying where to get the money for next school year's expenses.

"Asadsad ka sana (I hope I could see her through)," she says, finding public elementary education "costly."

In last year's enrollment, she paid P1,200 for tuition, other fees and books. Two pairs of uniform cost P500. Shoes, bag and school supplies cost another P500.

Producing the baon (allowance), P30 for food and P20 for transportation, is a daily problem to Manaloto who earns a living by framing photographs.

Those sum up to P1,000 monthly or one-fourth of what she earns. Occasionally, there are school projects worth P60 at most. She shells out less than P10 for test papers.

Her goal is to send her daughter to college but the high cost of living, she adds, makes that very uncertain.

That has happened to Manaloto's son Edmar who finished only high school in 2003.

"Most of the time my daily allowance to school was only P10," Edmar says.

In the last three years, he has constantly looked for jobs but got none. His likes had nil chances, he points out.

On Friday, the INQUIRER saw him applying for a job at SM City Pampanga as a stock clerk. The giant retail firm accepts high school graduates. Edmar says he wants the job badly, which pays P260 daily, so he could help his sister finish elementary school and proceed to high school. He has not dropped his plan to enter college and intends to save some money for it.

Disturbing figures

In this Pampanga capital, Mayor Oscar Rodriguez says some figures in the education sector are "disturbing."

Of the more than 74,000 youths in the city in 2005, only 28,288 were in the elementary while 12,378 were in high school. The rest were presumed to be in



SOME college students have to work to pay for their tuition. But at the end of the day, there is no more energy left to study.

continued to discriminate IPs, discouraging many from pursuing school.

Indigenous Filipinos from Benguet, Mt. Province, Ifugao, Kalinga, Apayao and Abra represent a quarter of the 15,000 transient students who live in Baguio at the start of school term each year.

The large student population has helped the city earn its reputation as a "university town" in the North, drawing P20 million to P60 million in expansion investments every two years, according to school officials.

Baguio's economy thrives more from the consumption of its transient students than from tourists, city planners say.

In the Cordillera, the National Statistical Coordination Board recorded 185,020 enrollees in elementary schools and 69,628 enrollees at provincial high schools last year.

"[The UP Kasanay gender program] just had a workshop for indigenous women, who again addressed the high dropout rate among elementary school children. Not that there are no schools, but even in barangays, indigenous children find it more and more difficult to cope in school because accepted textbooks and curriculums malign their ethnicity," Rovillos says.

Poverty is still a fundamental deterrent to pursuing education, he says. "They don't have clothes. They don't have anything decent or clean to wear everyday to school."

"They also have to travel far to reach school. The distance makes travel expensive," he adds.

Margarita Jasmin, CHEd Cordillera director, said private educators have started to penetrate the provincial market because of the growth in Baguio City.

Kalinga, which is a 12-hour ride from Baguio, has its own year-old nursing course at the Saint Tom's College.

Jasmin says Baguio's top courses are still nursing, information technology and education because of reports that the United States requires two million overseas Math and science teachers, and the constant demand in Europe for Filipino nurses.

Leon Dacanay, assistant director of the National Economic and Development Authority in the Cordillera, says the regional development council (RDC) has been pushing for a development strategy that defines the region as a center of education in Northern Luzon.

(To be continued.)

college or out-of-school.

According to him, the trend in the city has been that only 47 out of 100 students get to complete the sixth grade but many of them fail the entrance examinations for secondary education. Of 100 students who entered high school, only 37 are able to graduate.

The poor performance landed this city's school division 15th in the Department of Education's regional ranking.

Rodriguez has retooled the city's program, making education the top priority in his administration's eight point agenda. The day care system and health and nutrition programs have been integrated in the education program.

On top of the P100-million loan being obtained from the Land Bank of the Philippines to decongest the classrooms, the city government has also increased the special education fund from real property tax collections from P27.5 million in 2004 to P41.4 million in 2005.

Tough task

"There is no other way to make education accessible to many young people except by helping improve their health and nutrition, increasing the number of teachers, upgrading their salaries, putting in more educational infrastructures and making jobs available to par-

ents," Rodriguez says.

Jeepney driver Ermal Aquino says it is every parent's obligation to give his or her children education. But this, he points out, is a tough task nowadays.

"Marirundi ka (It's troubling me)," he says.

His eldest child, now a first year student at a public high school, spends P80 daily for allowance. His youngest, enrolled in fourth grade at a public elementary school here, gets P30. That leaves Aquino with less than P300 to spend for the family's three meals and other expenses.

Enrollment last year saw him forking out P5,000 for the two children, requiring him to spend 18 hours or six hours more than his regular time on the road.

"Pilitan ku lang apayang, gang gunang ku king ulad (I will exert my best to make them reach college, even if I have to crawl on rat infested grounds)," says Aquino, a single parent.

Because education was unaffordable to her family, Jessmay Peña, 20, dropped out of her computer science course in 2001 while she was just in first year.

While tuition was high enough, at about P300 per unit at the time, books, supplies, transportation and uniform and other school expenses were too much to bear for her single mother.

"Poverty really is a hindrance in getting

an education," she says.

She tried sustaining her education by working in a fast food restaurant. At the end of the day, however, she has no more energy left to study.

Out of reach

Data from the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) indicated that college education is not within the reach of poor families in Central Luzon.

A partial list in 2004 showed that subjects cost from a low of P105 to a high of P750 per unit. A university charged not less than P25,000 per semester.

In 2005, the courses that attract many enrollees were nursing (from 29,240 to 40,620), business education (34,205), teacher education (28,219), engineering (22,491) and information technology (18,495).

At least 147 of 164 universities and colleges in Central Luzon are privately owned. Only 13 are funded and managed by the government.

As of March 10 this year, at least 41 schools have applied for three to 20 percent increase in tuition and other fees.

In the Cordillera

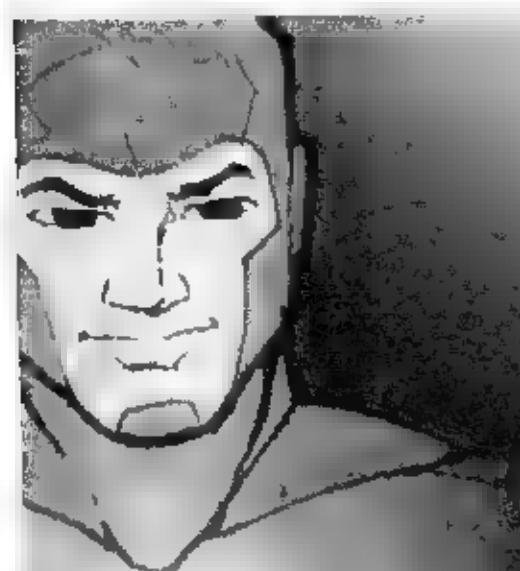
The CHED and the Department of Education acknowledge that a strong peso and the resulting 7.6 percent inflation rate warrant an increase in fees for schools in the Cordillera.

Nine major colleges have notified CHED of fee increases that range from 3 percent to 17.8 percent. Saint Louis University in Baguio City is seeking a 17 percent hike and has confronted protests from students who object to various expenses such as a mandatory Internet card that is designed to access the school's electronic library.

The immediate impact will be a reduction in enrollment, says Dr. Raymundo Rovillos, convenor for ethnicity and gender studies at the University of the Philippines Baguio.

But he says the toll will fall on indigenous peoples' (IPs) communities that are striving to access mainstream education to land better jobs.

Rovillos was commissioned by former Education Secretary Edilberto de Jesus to determine the impact of the teaching system on indigenous Filipinos. His study results proved that many schools



Martin Lorenzo
Chairman and CEO,
Pancake House
as RING FORCE

Industry: Food
Business Challenge: Handle the volume of information and transactions across Pancake House, Inc.'s multiple brands and branches
Secret Weapon: Microsoft Dynamics for Accounting
Sidekick: Infosoft International Solutions, Inc.

Pancake House, Inc. focuses on acquiring underdeveloped brands that have the potential to grow, and building them to become the top-of-mind choice for casual fine dining. Over the past five years, we have experienced average annual revenue growth of 68 percent managing three brands that altogether have 93 branches across the country. It suddenly became imperative to use an accounting solution that was both powerful and scalable to handle the volume of financial transactions for all 60 branches of Pancake House, 11 branches of Teriyaki Boy, and 22 branches of Dencio's nationwide and our choice with Microsoft Dynamics.



Louie Gutierrez
Managing Director,
Silverworks
as SILVERSTREAK

Industry: Jewelry
Business Challenge: Stay ahead of the competition in terms of product, marketing, and operations
Secret Weapon: Microsoft Dynamics for Accounting
Sidekick: Global Implementation Services, Inc.

Silverworks not only introduced silver jewelry into the mainstream almost 15 years ago, but has developed a steady market demand for this now popular type of jewelry. Naturally, competition has increased so we ensure that we stay ahead of the competition in three respects – our products, our brand, and our operations. We come up with more new product designs in a week than other companies do in a month, and we engage in tri-media advertising. We have also invested in Microsoft's sophisticated accounting tool to maximize operational efficiencies across Silverworks' 40 branches nationwide. With all our stores wired, data and reports are always up to the minute, enabling us to quickly shift gears and adjust to changing business requirements.

Microsoft Dynamics

Be our next success story.

Strict rules on foundations

UNTIL TWO YEARS AGO, REGISTERING non-stock, non-profit organizations as foundations was a breeze.

Foundations are non-stock, non-profit corporations that are organized primarily to extend grants or endowments to people in need of financial assistance.

The standard minimum requirement on capitalization for stock corporations was applied to foundations.

Unless something material was omitted in the corporate papers, it didn't take more than a week for a corporation to earn the right to add the word "Foundation" in its corporate name.

That word has a certain ring that adds prestige or stature to the company that bears it. It gives the impression that the organization and people behind it are "missionaries" of sorts who are motivated by a sincere desire to help others.

With that kind of perception, the task of soliciting monetary donations or assistance from potential donors has become easier, especially if they are based in foreign countries with liberal tax laws on charitable gift giving.

Unfortunately, some unscrupulous people have used foundations as vehicles for money laundering, illegal operation and other activities that made a mockery of the objectives for which they were organized.

Bank deposit

Today, the registration of a foundation requires clear proof of capacity to give financial grants or assistance to the proposed subject of the charitable act.

The organizers of the foundation must deposit at least P1 million in a bank as seed money or capital. That amount, which should be covered by a certificate of bank deposit, has to stay in the bank until the registration is completed and the foundation becomes operational.

Although bank certificates enjoy the presumption of validity, the Securities and Exchange Commission, for good measure, verifies their authenticity from their indicated sources.

A bank that is found to have issued a false certificate stands to be blacklisted in the roster of banks whose certificates can be accepted for purposes of corporate registration.

Worse, it shall be reported to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas for investigation and, if warranted, the imposition of appropriate disciplinary action.

And the bank employee responsible for the forged document and the person who included it in the application for registration could face falsification of commercial documents charges.

Provisional

The P1-million requirement is not aimed at dampening the enthusiasm of civic-minded

Corporate Securities Info

Raul Palabriga

people who want to form a corporation to accomplish some charitable or social objectives.

For a lesser amount, depending on the cost of the planned projects, they can form a non-stock, non-profit corporation for that purpose.

The corporation can do anything that a foundation can do, except put the word "Foundation" in its corporate name.

Even without that label, the corporation may, if its articles of incorporation and by-laws permit it, solicit monetary donations and other forms of material assistance from third parties to help it accomplish its goals.

Later, when the corporation is able to raise the P1 million, it can apply for the amendment of its corporate papers to enable it to enjoy the rights and privileges of a foundation, including the use of the "F" word.

Incidentally, the SEC may reduce the amount of the deposit if there are meritorious reasons to justify the reduction.

It is also essential that the corporation seeking registration as a foundation submit a plan of operation stating the following:

- Its mode of operation,
- Sources of funds,
- Proposed application of those funds, and
- Prospective beneficiaries of its grants or endowments

Exemptions

The interest in organizing foundations may be attributed in part to the perception that they enjoy certain tax privileges that other corporations cannot avail of.

True, foundations can be exempted from the payment of income tax from revenues earned in their operation and that donations to them by third parties can be excused from the payment of the donor's tax.

But these tax perks are not automatic, or come as a matter of course upon the issuance of the certificate of registration as a foundation.

They have to be applied for and approved by the Bureau of Internal Revenue. And getting that approval is not easy.

Because taxes are considered the bread and butter of government and therefore tax exemptions are strictly construed against the party claiming it, the applicant-foundation must prove to the satisfaction of the BIR that, based on its track record, it deserves to be treated differently in the payment of taxes. For feedback, please write to rpalabriga@inquirer.com.ph

I VIVIDLY REMEMBER A CONVERSATION I had many years ago in 1974, which marked a turning point in my leadership journey.

I was sitting at a Holiday Inn with my friend, Kurt Campmeyer, when he asked me if I had a personal growth plan. I didn't. In fact, I didn't even know you were supposed to have one.

Up until that point, the best term for my growth would be "accidental growth." I didn't grow on purpose, but I loved people and worked hard so that I caught a few things along the way.

That night with Kurt, I realized that to grow like I wanted, my personal development couldn't be hit-and-miss. I needed to initiate and activate. I made a decision to devote myself to personal growth. I literally made personal growth my personal mission.

In my book, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, I talk about the Law of Process, which says, "Leaders develop daily, not in a day." Our natural inclination is to overestimate the event and underestimate the process. We wait for a special occasion or an intense experience to boost our growth instead of appreciating the process. In the words of my friend Kevin Myers: "Everyone is looking for a quick fix, but what they really need is fitness."

We don't mature momentarily, but over the long-term. As we continue on our quest to become more skillful as leaders, let's look at seven statements about the growth process:

1. Growth is not automatic. Paul Harvey said it best: "You can tell you're on the road to success; it's uphill all the way." You can't coast uphill. Growth doesn't happen by itself; it requires an active investment of time.

2. Earl Nightingale said: "If you'll spend one hour a day, every day for five years on a given subject, within five years you'll become an expert on that subject." In 1974, I made that decision—to set aside one hour a day for personal growth.

Over 30 years later, I find that the more I learn and grow, the more precious that hour is to me.

2. Growth is the great separator between those who succeed and those who do not. When I see a person beginning to separate themselves from the pack, it's almost always due to personal growth.

Personal growth

A LEADER'S WAY

John C. Maxwell

As Bennis & O'Toole say: "It is the capacity to develop and improve their skills that distinguishes leaders from followers."

When I went to college, there was no gap between me and my peers, none at all. Since 1974, I have diligently followed through on my commitment to grow an hour every day, and now the gap, in most cases, is wide.

Am I smarter than my former classmates? Not at all. Many of them danced circles around me academically. The growth factor—my long-term commitment to personal development—made the difference.

3. Growth takes time, and only time can reveal certain lessons to us. We've all heard, "Experience is the best teacher," but it never has been and never will be. Evaluated experience is the best teacher. Reflective thinking is required to turn experience into insight.

If you're a young LW subscriber without a wealth of personal experience, borrow the experience. Ask questions, listen and learn from a successful leader that has gone before you.

4. The more we grow, the more we know we need to grow. In other words, when you start developing yourself, instead of feeling wise, you'll be struck by how much you don't know.

Alvin Toffler, in *Future Shock*, once observed: "The illiterate of the future are not those who cannot read or write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn."

5. Growth equals change. To develop, we must step away from comfort and welcome fresh and challenging experiences. Growth demands a temporary surrender of security. It may mean giving up familiar but limiting patterns, safe but unrewarding work, values no longer believed in, and relationships that have lost their meaning.

6. Growth inside fuels growth outside. The highest reward of our toil is

not what we get for it, but what we become by it.

At 17, I decided to read extensively, file my favorite articles, and prepare lessons. Little did I realize that out of the simple discipline of reading, filing and preparing lessons, I would receive content, develop creativity, begin to speak, and eventually author numerous books.

7. Choose to grow in the areas of your strengths, not in the areas of your weakness. There are only four things I do well, just four, and I focus exclusively on them. I lead, communicate, create, and network. That's it.

I spend all of my time on one of those four strength zones. The secret of success: people lies in their ability to discover their strengths and to organize their life so that these strengths can be applied.

Benjamin Franklin personifies the spirit of inventiveness of the modern world. His accomplishments read like an almanac of greatness: Inventor; poet; philosopher; pamphleteer; distinguished member of three national academies of science; America's first Postmaster General; founder of Philadelphia's first police force, lending library, and the academy later to become the University of Pennsylvania; founder of the first fire insurance company; delegate to the Constitutional Convention; drafter of the Declaration of Independence; one of America's most effective statesmen and ambassadors.

Yet for all of his achievements, the epitaph that Franklin wrote for himself simply reads, "Here lies the body of Ben Franklin, printer."

In honoring his humble roots as a printer's apprentice, Benjamin Franklin reveals the mystery to his greatness.

It was in the world of printing where Franklin was first exposed to new books, writers and ideas. His fame, accomplishments and accolades would never have been possible without the love of learning and habits of growth imprinted in his life during his early days as a printer.

For information on John Maxwell's in-house or public leadership or team-work workshops, please email us at maxwell@inspire.ph or call 813-2732/2733 and ask for Gina. Text MAXWELL ON 4632 (Smart) to get daily SMS leadership insights from John Maxwell. God bless!

Precious Tabia
Finance Manager,
The British School Manila
as LADY MINERVA

Industry: Education

Business Challenge: Effectively manage the school's finances to support operations and expansion.

Secret Weapon: Microsoft Dynamics for Accounting

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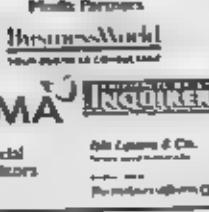
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BUSINESS Monday

MAP stand on the Mining Act of 1995

OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS, WE HAVE BEEN reading reports that two mining companies, Lafayette Mining in Rapu-Rapu, Albay and Heritage Resources and Mining Corp. in Homonhon Island, Guiuan, Eastern Samar are being petitioned for closure by the local community leaders because of their role in destroying the environment and displacing

Complaints similar to these have been greet- ing the Philippine Mining Act of 1995 from the time it was passed 10 years ago. While the constitutional- ity of the law was assailed before the Supreme Court in 1997, the high court subse- quently ruled that the law was constitutional.

The Supreme Court decision was hailed by the local and international business commu- nity, as a boon to the economy, a boost to job creation particularly in the rural areas where it is most needed, a magnet for much-needed foreign direct investments, and a boon to the local capital market.

The ruling of its legality was expected to open the floodgates of development and help alleviate the country's fiscal problems.

Those opposed to the Mining Act mainly argue that many times in the past, the mining industry had degraded the environment, de- prived communities of their traditional means of livelihood and irreparably ruined their culture.

Those opposed also say that allowing full foreign equity in mining ventures, in effect, surrenders the country's sovereignty to non- Filipinos.

While the Management Association of the Philippines acknowledges these valid con- cerns, the very significant economic and other benefits from the development of the mining sector should be the paramount considera- tion of a country plagued by poverty and large fiscal deficits.

Instead of limiting the activities of the mining sector, the government should encourage its development, while taking firm and forceful steps to prevent the regulatory shortcomings and accidents of the past.

The Mining Act already has sufficiently clear provisions to protect the environment, control pollution, rehabilitate and improve mined-out areas, and protect the rights of mining communities.

The problem is not the law as the law has

MAPPING THE FUTURE

anticipated and cured the previous negative effects of mining, but the government agen- cies' inability to strictly and religiously enforce these provisions and institute sanctions for non-compliance or violations of the regu- lations.

By lifting barriers to the development and extraction of the country's mineral resources, and allowing foreign equity capital to partici- pate, this law contributes in a major way to economic development by creating jobs, alle- viating poverty, and reducing the country's trade and fiscal deficits.

The MAP, therefore, urges the private sec- tor to support this law and assist the govern- ment in its proper and strict implementation.

The MAP with its commitment to the theme "Call To Action: Country Above Self," is prepared to take the lead in organizing the private sector in assisting the government to properly and effectively implement the Min- ing Act as a patriotic duty.

It is not the MAP's intent to create and fund a body to "police and regulate" which is the mandated role of government but, the MAP, with its depth of management expertise can be a potent force in mobilizing other non- profit business organizations in providing a forum where mining issues can be discussed with all interested parties (to include mining companies, the local government, the affected communities and the church) and together arrive at solutions to specific mining issues for the optimum benefit of the Filipino people.

In addition, the MAP through its committed members, offers to assist the LGUs and af- fected communities in developing the moni- toring and reporting mechanism for policing compliance of mining companies to their so- cial, economic and environmental commit- ments under the law so that the benefits from mining can be enjoyed without the ill-effects of negligence, incompetence and apathy.

(This is the official statement of the Management Association of the Philippines on the Philip- pine Mining Act of 1995. The MAP secretariat may be reached via mapsec@globenet.com.ph)



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Subsection Editor Lito B. Zulueta



Iloilo, heritage champion

LOILO EVOKE MANY PLEASANT images, each one as soothing as its melodic language whose lilt perfectly sums up the local lifestyle and culture: laid-back Southern gentility graciously lived in a city on the banks of a river whose languorous flow sets the peaceful tone of the residents' pulse.

There is no other city in the Philippines with an image as distinct as Iloilo.

Once the center of the Visayan sugar industry, the city retains vestiges of that era. Muelle Loney, the city dock, commemorates Nicholas Loney, the Englishman who industrialized the sugar industry in the 19th century, exporting sugar globally from Iloilo, and brought prosperity to the province.

There was another side to the entrepreneurial Loney who flooded the Iloilo market with cheap, machine-woven textiles imported from England, a move killing the flourishing Ilonggo hand-loom industry which was the source of the best hand-woven fabric in the Philippines.

Nevertheless, the face Iloilo presents today is still sugar-sweet. Elegant arched colonnades dating back to the Commonwealth era still shade city-center sidewalks, an urban amenity now vanished from other Philippine city centers in the name of development.

The Commonwealth-era buildings of Iloilo face extinction. The new malls have taken away retail activity from the old city center. There are plans to reuse the old downtown buildings to produce a heritage-destination setting that attracts the public and tourists away from the malls, a plan seen to revive the old city center and return luster to the city's tarnished pride of place.

Iloilo ilustrados

Descendants of illustrious Iloilo families continue to live in their stately homes that stand sometimes alone, at other times behind rows of commercial developments, on city streets that retain shabby remnants of its former grandeur.

Progress has swept away sidewalks, trees, and the small plazas that once made the city more livable than it is today.

Nevertheless, the city presents a wide range of architecture. Houses range from pre-20th century *bay* or *bato* of the Spanish colonial era.

In Iloilo, the houses take on a Visayan character. They are more open and embellished than their Tagalog relatives. Superb mansions from the American colonial era, built in the 1920s in an eclectic style typical to Iloilo, remain.

Probably one of the best-preserved 1930s Art Deco houses in the country is aptly called Boat House, a reference to its flowing, streamlined lines recalling sleek ocean liners considered the height of modernity during that era, causing that particular variant of the Art Deco style to be called Modern.

Iloilo unfurls on different levels. Some mansions struggle for existence side by side with unregulated commercial development on city streets. Fast-food stores in malls fail to capture faithful customers who still insist on going to the market, not a restaurant, for an authentic batchoy fix.

Ilonggo culture tempts 21st-century mass media and Internet culture with Visayan tradition, creating an interesting mix of cutting edge technology and the old.

With its feet firmly planted on tradition is the Panaderia de Mollo, an Iloilo icon deserving to be a national treasure. Its trademark striped tins of handmade cookies are prized gifts to any Filipino. Its bakery products are coveted Pinoy comfort food that maintain the old taste and texture no longer

found in mass-manufactured products from commercial bakeries.

Established by the Jason sisters, ownership has passed to their Sanson great-granddaughters, the fourth generation of the family to manage the bakery. This generation zealously maintains original family recipes, still kneads and mixes by hand, uses traditional wooden and bamboo implements, and bakes in clay ovens fired by wood especially grown in the family's plantation.

Conservation body

Bent on preserving heritage, the Iloilo City Cultural Heritage and Conservation Council (ICCHCC) actively takes a hand in guiding the city to retaining a balance between tradition and the 21st century.

Enjoying support from City Mayor Jerry Treñas, who understands that the identity of Iloilo lies in its culture, well-connected ICCHCC board members are Iloilo movers involved in city government, civic organizations, mass media, business, professional and academic circles.

The ICCHCC is among the few organizations in the Philippines that have greatly increased heritage awareness. The organization successfully held a heritage awards program in 2005 that awarded the winners of a student essay competition and presented awards recognizing the best conservation and adaptive reuse of heritage architecture in the city.

Among its awardees were ancestral homes reused as schools, religious convents or restaurants, proof that heritage structures can be used



for contemporary needs.

In May, the ICCHCC goes into full gear. Iloilo hosts the national culminating activity for Philippine Heritage Month on May 30-31 this year.

For the entire month of May the tireless ICCHCC presents a series of activities celebrating heritage. A Flores de Mayo, exhibits of traditional culture, musical performances, lectures, and dance performances will be held in different venues all over the city.

The closing ceremonies in Iloilo City will be

ENDANGERED

are the colonnaded sidewalks of downtown Iloilo, which need revival to counteract the flow of retail activity sucked away by newly constructed malls.

BAMBOO patterns in lace-like finery hallmark the Ilonggo variant of the traditional *bohoy kubo*.

the highlight of the month-long celebration and focus on Panay cultural heritage, specifically Iloilo. During the two days, activities and events will include walking tours, park concerts, cultural performances, religious rites, and ceremonial receptions.

A good place to start an Iloilo visit would be at Museo Iloilo, whose exhibits introduce what the city is all about and whose director, Zaffy Ledesma, has an inside track on local history.

Walk next door from the Museo to the Department of Tourism Office (tel. 033-3375411) for detailed information on all cultural and tourism events sponsored either by the ICCHCC or the DOT which share an office in Iloilo City.

Feedback is welcome at afvillalon@hotmail.com

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Rock Drilon's personal unravelings

By Lisa Ito
Contributor

AS A VISUAL FORM AND METAPHOR, the line references energy, the flow of life and the progression of events. In Rock Drilon's recent paintings, the line and its undulations into loops, circles and masses signify a journey toward the unraveling of self.

A tracing of the lines in Drilon's works rendered in acrylic on canvas in the show "Recent Paintings" reveals a progression that, if interpreted in the light of psychological analysis, charts the unwinding and journeying of forms, perhaps the artist's unintended symbol for his internal sojourns, across an expanse of space.

"Selective Memory" is a diptych revealing Drilon's personal attempt to decipher self and lay down visual references for assessing the events of his personal life. As the title implies, the artist does not engage in a strictly chronological accounting of everything that has happened since birth, but, rather, systematically filters recollections of events that have shaped, strengthened, or scarred him through the decades.

This particular painting is Drilon's visual translation of biography-psychology, a healing technique used to draw out recurring and unresolved experiences—motifs of conflict, so to speak. But instead of recollecting the past through words, Drilon uses visual references to situate deep personal musings into context, in order to see how they fit into the entire puzzle of life.

After scribbling cathartic passages on canvas, the artist obscures the text with abstract forms, covering the entire work



"ORANGE Line"

with personal symbols.

Drilon's attempt to chart the personal may be gleaned from the main motifs of the work, which include numbers arranged beside parallel lines or planes, similar to the lines of a writing pad or the unfolding expanse of a staircase.

The undulating and sequential flow of numerals from one to 50 marks the artist's attempts at accounting for the passage of his personal life. The numbers subtly shift in hue as the numerical progression increases: from bright orange at the very start, to red, maroon, violet, blue, turquoise, and gold.

The color shifts are likewise signifiers of how the artist views each respective phase. Other forms in the work are open-ended and recurring loops treading the expanse of space.

The way the lines of Drilon's paintings entangle in circular journeys speak of in-

ternal contradictions. The way the artist's forms loop in a sweeping, all-encompassing way in the work "Selective Memory," for instance, is far different from the way they all converge in other paintings in the show, such as the series titled "Untitled" 1-3.

According to the artist, these were among a series of paintings produced in Brooklyn, New York, where he stayed for a brief hiatus last year.

Situated inconspicuously at the periphery of the gallery's wall, the small-scale paintings are variations on a single image: a continuous line looped up and bunching into a single entanglement.

The tangled and winding forms in dismal hues point to literal allusions beneath the mass of convolutions. This motif is repeated in the exposed sketch lines beneath the forms, jutting out like thorns piercing the pale rose backgrounds of the works.

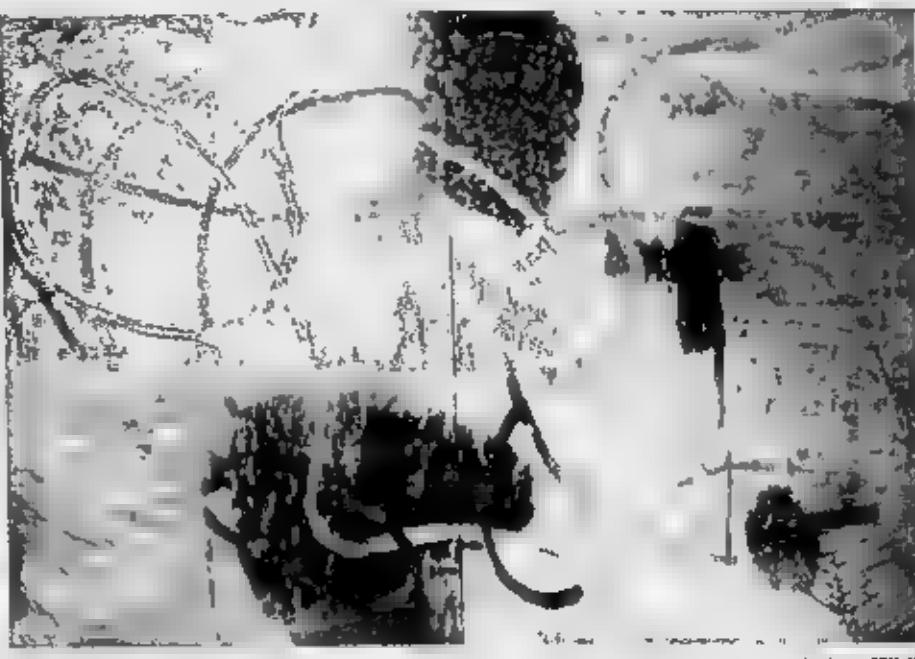
Peripheral

The rest of the paintings in the show demonstrate the artist's cognizance of the peripheral.

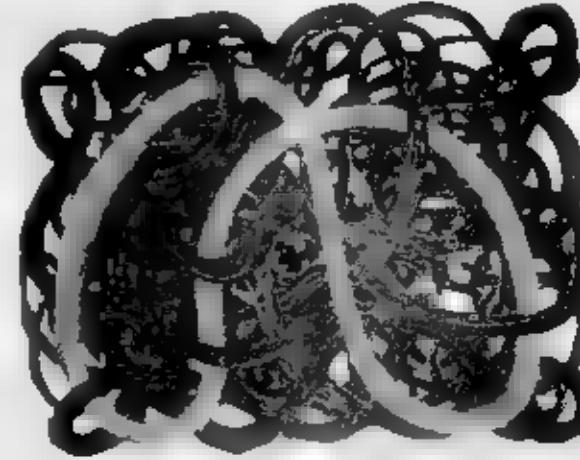
"Orange Line" derives its title from a sliver of tangerine in a sea of turquoise and milksh white filling the canvas.

"Yellow Line" is a diptych which derives its title from, in a plane predominantly filled with black, gray and blue forms, a deliberate canary line that seemingly passes off as a random or an insignificant part of the complex painting.

"Red Line," similarly, reinforces the veiled irony between the title's text and the images painted on canvas. The literal referent of this work's title, too, is similarly situated at the very periphery of the



"SELECTIVE Memory"



"UNTITLED"

painting: a gaunt, vertical scarlet slash lost in a galaxy of floating and expansive forms, like a lacerated wound on the verge of bleeding.

These works, taken as a whole, are subtle reminders of formal and personal contradictions. The metaphors in "Recent Paintings," however, are deeply and intimately personal ones that may not be readily evident to viewers unacquainted with the artist.

The veneer of detachment is likewise reinforced by the straightforward and seemingly impersonal title of the show

and the simple titles of the works.

The show, after all the scrutiny, is an affirmation of how abstraction articulates the personal. It demonstrates how either the studied or spontaneous composition of forms creates concrete images of the inchoate and complex mass of subjectivities brimming beneath skin.

Rock Drilon's "Recent Paintings" is on view at Mag-net Gallery Katipunan until March 31. Call 9293191 or e-mail mag-netcafekatip@yahoo.com.ph

VISUAL ARTS

Palencia wins in Busan

JAPALENCIA has been chosen one of six prizewinners in an open international competition for the 2006 Busan Biennale Sea Art Festival, which will open on Sept. 17 and runs until November in Busan, Korea. His prize-winning entry, "Ocean Dragon," figures prominently in the Biennale's theme of "Public Art," curated by Ryu Byoung Hak, and will be installed on the promenade along Haeundae Beach in Busan in July. Other winners are Subodh Kerkar of India, Alina and Jeff Blums of the US, Tetsuo Yamafuji of Japan and Art Family of Korea.

Art Discovery exhibit

THE ART Discovery and Learning Foundation Inc. will hold a group exhibit of small works on flowers, March 20-23, at the Blooms and Foliage Inspirations, 123-A Scout Gandia cor Scout Torillo, QC. Participating artists include Judy Lim, Dr. Lorenza Caipotra, Roger Chavez, Serena Borras, Isabella Maderazo, Jose Dinglasan, Ben Infante, Gaudencio Remion Jr. and Fernando B. Seña.

Women artists at Liogoren

EIGHT Filipino women artists come together in Liogoren Gallery's annual "8 Filipina," an invitational art exhibit in commemoration of Women's Month. The show will feature oil paintings, photography, installation art and digital arts by Isabel Aquilizan, Cynthia Alexander, Ligaya Fernando-Amilbangsa, Hannah Liogoren, Isa Lorenzo, Lea Padilla, Teena Saulo and Rolly Yusli. The show opens on March 24 and runs until April 16 in Liogoren Gallery, 111 New York, Cubao, QC, and on April 17-23 at Galerie Y in SM Megamall.

Cordero at West

LOUIE CORDERO presents his latest one-man exhibit, "Bad Taste," March 21-April 8 in West Galleria, 4B West Ave., QC. The exhibit features familiar icons in visceral situations. It attempts to convey the artist's thought through visual juxtapositions. Call 4110336.

Manalang at Genesis

NOLI

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will mount his

first solo exhibit, "Ave Maria: A Homage," March 24, in Galleria Genesis (4/F, Building A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City). The exhibit features some 30 watercolor depictions of the Holy Mother. The exhibit will run until April 8. Call 6338137/8138.

"Inculcation" at National Museum

THE NAT-ONAL Museum is showing "Inculcation: Museum as Nation," the final leg in a series of exhibitions to prepare for the opening of the National Art Gallery. Museum director Cora Alvina will host a reception on March 22, 6 p.m. The exhibit, which runs until May 31, can be viewed on the 4/F Museum of the Filipino People at the Teodoro Valencia Circle (formerly Agrifina), Wednesday-Sunday, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Call 5271215, 5243005 and 5270278.

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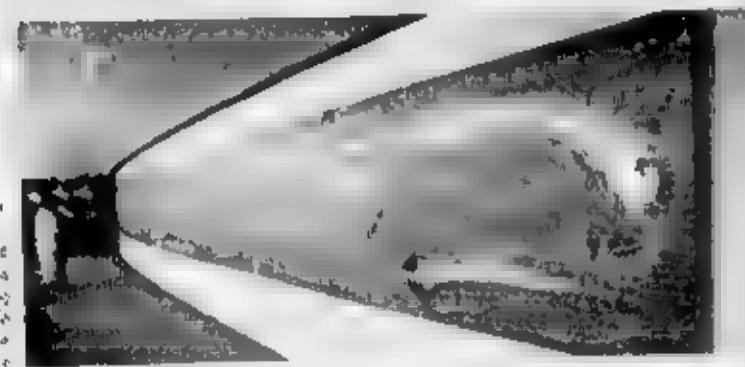
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MONDAY, MARCH 20, 2006



AMAN and his artistic gigantism

An artist creating his own reality

By Constantino C. Tejero

AMANDO SANTOS III'S LATEST WORK is a sight to behold. Called "Event Space" and rendered in oil on canvas, it is a 10-panel piece of artistic gigantism.

This is displayed as a mural in the artist's 11th exhibit until March 26 in the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City. The single canvas expands to some 5 ft in width and 80 ft in length running along the wall of Pasigyo Vicente Manansala (2/F Hallway).

The young artist, who signs his works simply "Aman," explains: "The long stretch of canvas allows me to create brushstrokes varying in length, size, gravity, violence, texture and movement."

The piece is technically composed of 10 canvases placed side by side on which are broadly applied brushstrokes of red, yellow, orange, white, gray, light blue and yellow-green on a plane of earth-brown.

The brushstrokes—a single stroke or two on each panel—range from circular to arching, peaking, undulating. Seen as a unit, they give the impression of one long disrupted movement.

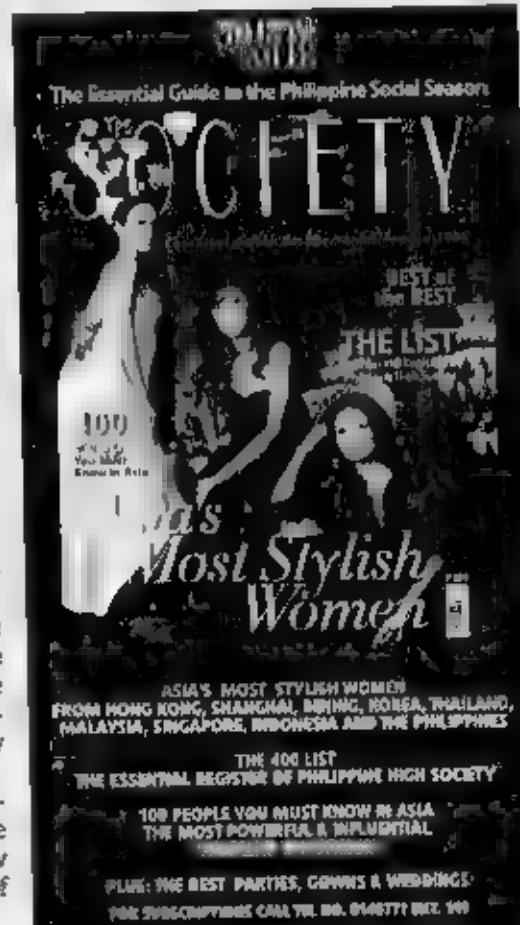
Says the artist: "A brushstroke applied on the canvas travels for a certain distance in space and time. These strokes vary depending on the applicator used and how much pigment it contains, or the manner and force with which they are applied on the canvas surface."

Aman's method is simple enough, it is the result that appears hard to comprehend. It's like the artist is foisting a game, presenting a jigsaw puzzle to the viewer, or playing with a law of physics.

First, he covered the long canvas with a scratchy color field embellished with giant brushstrokes. Then he fragmented the canvas into 10 equal parts. Finally, he rearranged the parts to break the strokes' visual and physical continuity.

So what does he want to achieve with the disarrangement?

"Once the pieces are joined together in a manipulated sequence, the brushstrokes offer a different visual account on these disjointed spatial indicators as our eyes follow their new course," the artist says. "It shows possible definitions of events, space and, ultimately, time—as a moment, departing from real time, which escapes the viewer's default knowledge



of time's entropic character."

That is, of course, Darwin's theory of relativity here applied on an artwork. Who would have thought something like that was practicable in painting?

The exhibition note elaborates: "The work seeks to contribute to the many possibilities of testing the concepts of space-time as presented in the field of physics. This examination into the broad dimension of physics as a contextual ap-

proach to art-making can be a considerable source for critical visual methodology and creative production, as in the case of art theories in semiotics, memory, power. This exhibit is a validation of the artist's chance to create his own reality through his artwork."

It is not surprising then to learn that Aman is taking up his Master of Fine Arts at the University of the Philippines, hotbed of such recondite ideas.

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- Adela Hipolito, a 46-year-old businesswoman and Pynocare user of 8 weeks

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- Rosanna Ocampo, a 46-year-old housewife, Pynocare user of 4 weeks

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- Joyce Fukuda, a 44-year-old golfer, Pynocare user of 4 weeks

"I have had melasma for the last five years as a result of excessive use of astringents and direct exposure to the sun. Since I started using Pynocare, I've noticed my cheeks have cleared up considerably. People around me have started noticing it too."

- Adela Pascolan, a 34-year-old Assistant Branch Manager, Pynocare user of 3 months

"I discovered Pynocare during the Pekas-Free Filipina Mall Tour here in Cebu. Since then, I have been using the product and observed that my melasma spots started to lighten. I'm happy with the results."

- Jenny Chua Chan, a 48-year-old Bank Employee and Pynocare user of 3 months



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Familiarity breeds contemplation

By Jessica Jalandoni-Robillos
Contributor

RIGHT AFTER EARNING HER FINE Arts degree at the College of the Holy Spirit where she majored in Art Education, Rona Buenaseda became One Chua and settled down to have three children. It would take eight years before she would put her degree to use, applying as an art teacher at the Immaculate Conception Academy. She only taught there for a year, though, because of maternal duties.

Unwilling to give up teaching, Rona decided to offer art classes and began with one student in her garage in San Juan. By giving out flyers, the number of enrollees grew and she now also holds classes in Makati. The ages of her pupils range from 7 to 60 years old, and she only allows a maximum of 10 per class, careful to give each student sufficient attention.

She is keen on urging youngsters to explore their artistic inclinations, recalling how her parents were very supportive of her own learning. She tells of how they fondly remember her constant doodling even before she learned to write. Throughout her elementary and high school years at Assumption College and also while her kids grew, Rona turned to sketching.

Nowadays her sketches serve as studies for works in watercolor, acrylic, and oil. Her first solo exhibit featured only watercolor pieces, but as she has reacquainted herself with oil, she finds she is enjoying her work

Her second show is "Seeing Through Color" at the Crucible Gallery (4/F, SM Megamall; tel. 6356061), March 21-April 2, presenting pieces that are pretty and feminine, very much like the artist herself.

Although in this age it may be inaccurate to say that floral arrangements, food and gardens are distinct womanly preoccupations, the notion seems apt for Rona Chua, since it applies both in her paintings and her being a homemaker.

Tranquility

New in this collection are serene landscapes, some inspired by pictures, some by



"UNDER the April Sun"

imagination. It seems, though, that the inclusion of garden chairs and an empty wooden boat indicate a personal want for tranquility—the artist being a mother/wife/teacher must somehow yearn for quiet time.

"Under the April Sun," for instance, echoes the constant wish of every busy mom for solitude, to lie off alone as a break from wifely duties and domesticity in general.

Which is not to say that Rona pines for a certain refuge. In fact, she says she is at peace and happiest when she is painting while listening to classical music.

This contentment is evident in her works, such as her florals surrounded by a dreamlike aura. The pieces are best experienced firsthand, because the ethereal detail do not show in pictures.

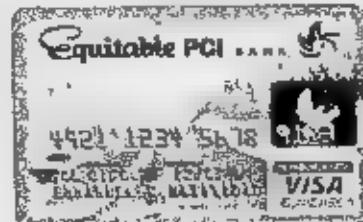
This outing, in fact, allows viewers to see through Rona Chua—in choosing to render the ever-familiar still life, she allows viewers a peek into her charmed life, one with loving husband and children she dotes on, who support her in return.

Hers is art borne of sheer, simple joy, speaking of fulfillment and fulfillment itself in its creation.

E-mail author at jejaro2002@yahoo.com



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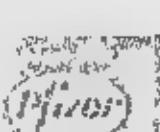
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ALDABA
as Cio Cio San
in "Madama
Butterfly"

By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

MAESTRA DALISAY ALDABA, the last great Filipina Madama Butterfly, was laid to rest last Wednesday to the strains of Puccini's "Un bel di" (sang with dramatic fervor by UP student Deeda Barreto) at the Santuario Chapel in Forbes Park.

A few months back, her equally illustrious sister, Estefania Aldaba Lim (who had passed away a mere two weeks earlier before Maestra) had asked me, "Pablo, you know the career of my sister, Dalisay? Don't you think she deserves to be National Artist?"

I said the honor was long overdue but the bureaucracy which still controls the leading cultural institutions has a strange way of working in this country.

Award-giving bodies only think of giving artists their long-overdue recognition only when they are already dead. The research groups working for these awards committees only work during awards season and don't really monitor artists who devoted an entire life to their art.

(I remember a cultural institution giving last-minute tribute to Zeneida Amador only in her deathbed.)

To those who didn't know Maestra Aldaba well, she is simply the last of the great Filipino Madama Butterflies and her passing away signals the end of an opera era in the country. She followed the illustrious trail of the country's first distinguished Cio Cio San—Isang Tapales and Jovita Fuentes. The first died without a decent tribute from the CCP or any cultural organization but the latter became National Artist.

Aldaba didn't stop even after her performing days were over. She taught, she founded the Opera Guild of the Philippines, and was laid to rest without a single representative from CCP and NCCA paying tribute to her in the Requiem Mass.

It was the same act of indifference I saw in the wake of Maestra Isang Tapales and Maestra Mercedes Matias Santiago (the country's first Lucia di Lammermoor).

Aldaba debuted in Madama Butterfly in the late '40s at the New York City Opera and reprised it in Philadelphia, Washington DC, and later in Spain (Oviedo) and France (Lyon, Nice, Marseilles).

The eminent Paul Hume reviewed Aldaba's Washington debut: "Miss Aldaba proved one of the finest singers to take on the role in the city. Her appearance is perfect for the part and she adds to it an ease and engaging stage manner that carried her through the unusually long role with no difficulty. Her voice is small but beautifully produced. It carried well and sounded as full as the larger voices with which it was matched. She won an ovation after her big Second Act aria."

As I reviewed the country's illustrious array of first-rate performing artists, none of them (except for Jovita Fuentes)—from violinist Carmenita Lozada, soprano Evelyn Mandac and pianist Cecile Licad—will ever get to be National Artists until their careers are long over.

Tribute to Redentor Romero

Another person who devoted an entire life to enriching the country's cultural life was the late violinist-conductor Redentor Romero. He brought first-rate artists to the countryside and I met first-rate instrumentalists and singers (from Nelly Miricioiu to Alexandru Tomescu) through him.

MAESTRA/D2

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Maestra Dalisay Aldaba deserved to be National Artist

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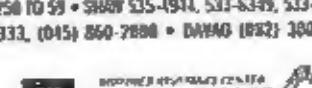
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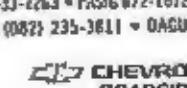
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D2 Children's book fosters pride in Pinoy heritage

ON ITS 130TH YEAR IN the Philippines, the Hongkong Shanghai Banking Corp. (HSBC), with the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and Sa Aklat Sisikat Foundation (SAS), has released "Of Jars and Weaves, Terraces and Beads: Icons of Our Living Culture."

The bilingual picture book in full color consists of seven stories based on seven cultural icons that every Filipino child should know. The seven icons are related to the early civilization that the Filipinos had before foreign colonial influences. The icons are based on research by cultural anthropologist E Landa Jocano.

The seven icons are the Banawe



HEIDI Abad

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Rice Terraces, which show ancient Filipinos' engineering skills; abaca ikat textile weave; mummification, which shows native Filipinos' knowledge of chemistry and the sciences; ancient glass beads; the Balanghái, which shows the native skill in boat-making; the Laguna copper plate, which contains ancient syllabary writing; the Ma-

nungkul jar, which represents a worldview and belief in the afterlife. Each story also reflects a value system.

Award-winning writers Carla Pacis and Heidi Emily Eusebio Abad wrote the stories.

"The icons we have written about show a Philippines that every Filipino child can be proud of,"

Pacis said.

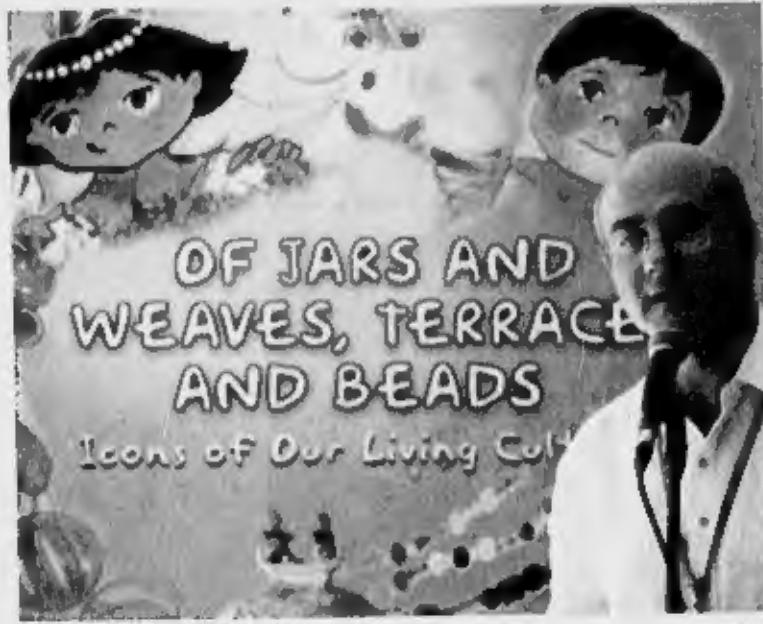
"It is hoped this book will remind today's generation of Filipinos about the values of industry, honesty, respect, and passion for protecting and improving upon the legacy of our forebears," Abad said.

Illustrations are by painter and printmaker Jeannie Javelosa.

Sa Aklat Sisikat (SAS), whose vision is to build a nation of readers through the implementation of reading programs in public schools, will distribute some 5,000 copies to 480 public schools nationwide.

At present, HSBC is sponsoring reading programs in 22 public elementary schools in Quezon City. HSBC will also provide copies to the HSBC Readiscovery Center libraries in Muntinlupa, Pasig, Manila and Quezon City.

"As the beneficiary of this HSBC-sponsored heritage children's book,



HSBC CEO Warner Manning

PHOTOS BY JIM GUAD PUNZALAN

the Sa Aklat Sisikat Foundation is enthusiastic and thrilled that our Filipino school children will learn

more about our early civilization through this beautiful book! Pride in one's country begins with an understanding of one's heritage. This book takes that much-needed first step," said Margarita Delgado, president of SAS.

Limited copies are available to the public for only P150 at MagNet

branches in Paseo Center, ABS-CBN Complex, Katipunan Ave., Shangri-La Mall, SM North Edsa, SM CenterPoint and the BayWalk.

Copies may also be purchased through the HSBC credit card. Log on to www.hsbc.com.ph to download the order form.

Call the HSBC public affairs department, 8305781. For every copy one buys, HSBC donates a copy to a public school library.

FROM COMIC BOOK TO FILM

The mask of the red death



V (HUGO Weaving) introduces himself after rescuing Evey (Natalie Portman) from London's "Fingermen."

THERE ARE SEVERAL REASONS why "V for Vendetta" is not your run-of-the-mill hero movie. The first is the mask (it has got to be the mask). Perhaps the only comic book hero whose real face or identity is never revealed, V wears a mask and hair that are supposed to be a likeness of Guy Fawkes, the famous conspirator hanged by England's James I for conspiracy to bomb London's Parliament building in 1605.

Second would be the expression on the mask—a veritable novelty. It wears a wide and silly grin, evoking a persona that borders on the mischievous if not the downright mad. And third is the actual, theatrical madness in the character behind the mask, in a manner reminiscent of Jack Nicholson's Joker in Tim Burton's "Batman" (1989).

"Vendetta" is based on the Warrior comic-book series created by Alan Moore and David Lloyd in 1981 and completed as a graphic novel under Vertigo (of the DC banner) in 1989. Set against a backdrop of a Britain in the near future, the story tells of an unforeseen "hero" out to remind everyone that life should not be as puppet-like as the fascist government directs. His medium

of choice? Terrorism and bombing key London structures such as the Parliament building and the Old Bailey.

The targets are symbolic, Parliament being the center of government and the Old Bailey the central criminal court, the proverbial cornerstone of Britain's justice system, which V considers to have fallen under the corrupt control of the fascist regime.

But meanwhile, V's intentions are not free from impurity, as he also nurses a murderous grudge against the government, particularly several personalities involved in his imprisonment in the government-run Larkhill Asylum, an incarceration that destroyed and created him at the same time.

V for visually stunning

"Vendetta" the movie cuts off much from the comic book story line, and effects a more than just a few changes perhaps for cinematic effect. But the script by the Wachowskis brothers (of "The Matrix" fame) leaves viewers hanging inasmuch as the final product is wanting in proper character and story development. The story is hard to follow, and moviegoers will wonder from time to time why and how things come to be.

Needless to say, fans of the graphic novel must brace themselves for major tweaking in the story, as in the case of



EVEY (Natalie Portman)

Evey, V's young female assistant, who becomes older in the movie version and whose background is changed to make her an activist against the dystopian regime.

The Wachowskis, however, together with a brilliant direction by their "Matrix" colleague, James McTeigue, ably pull off a visually stunning watch rich with the red of blood and roses and the tense, brooding darkness of a democratically failed London.

The action sequences should satisfy viewers wowed by the quick and powerful fighting trend started by the "Matrix" trilogy.

V is played magnificently by Hugo Weaving, whose voice acting shows why he is in a league of his own. Unlike in the cases of his Agent Smith and El-

rond, Weaving had to find a way to effectively impart the masked V's emotions only through the nuances and tone of his speech. He succeeds verily.

Natalie Portman's Evey, meanwhile, is likewise commendable. An accomplished actress herself, Portman sheds off her sweet countenance for a shaved head, a troubled look, and subtly angry eyes.

They are joined by actors Stephen Rea as Chief Inspector Finch, and John Hurt as the irritatingly self-absorbed and overconfident fascist leader Adam Sutler.

In all, "Vendetta" will etch itself in viewers' minds because of the questions that accompanies it. What if you have a hero who does not save lives, but kills in order to achieve his goal? Which is the hero, and which the villain? The question raises a chilling reminder of present and recent societal events, globally.

After all, in not revealing who is behind the mask, V does not represent any man or any ideology, but becomes merely an idea, something that puts a twist in what and how we think about things. And like he says, an idea does not go away that easily. In fact, it doesn't die, but will remain cowering playfully in people's minds, dancing to

Beethoven's Fifth Symphony while a statue of a lady holding a sword and scales blows up into a fireworks display.

Book club on 'Dante Club,' 'Cholera'

THE POWER BOOK CLUB WILL TACKLE "THE Dante Club" by Matthew Pearl on March 28, 6:30 p.m., at Powerbooks Greenbelt, and "Love in the Time of Cholera" by Nobel Prize author Gabriel García Márquez on March 29, 6:30 p.m., at Powerbooks Megamall.

"The Dante Club" is about the literary geniuses who are finishing America's first translation of the "Divine Comedy" and are preparing to unveil Dante's remarkable visions to the New World. The members of the club fight to keep a sacred literary cause alive, but their plans fall apart

when a series of murders erupts through Boston and Cambridge. The scholars realize that the gruesome killings are modeled on the descriptions of Hell's punishments from Dante's Inferno.

"Love in the Time of Cholera" is about unrequited passion so strong that it binds three people's lives together for more than 50 years. In the story of Florentino Ariza, who waits more than half a century to declare his undying love to the beautiful Fermina Daza, whom he lost to Dr. Juvenal Urbino so many years before, García Már-

quez has created a vividly absorbing fictional world.

Registrants will get a 10-percent off the featured book. Powercard Plus holders can get 20-percent off. The first 16 registrants will get a free cup of coffee from the Java Man.

Powerbooks Specialty Store has branches at Greenbelt 4 (7576428 to 29), Megamall (6352898 to 99), Alabang Town Center (8505662 to 63), Glorietta (7527075), Shangri-La (6380023/25) and Robinsons Place Ermita (5233334/5243448).

HOW HAS A BOOK CHANGED MY LIFE?
This book taught me how to go beyond my self-absorption

By Susan G. Daluz

WHEN MY OWN MARRIAGE of 20 years was on the verge of destruction due to mid-life crisis and depression, "The Purpose-Driven Life," by Rick Warren, greatly helped me in pulling myself back together.

This book has opened my eyes to the reality of this question: When others, meaning my immediate family (especially my children), depend so much on me for their well-being, physical health, emotional stability, and, most important, their spiritual nourishment, whom can I depend on?

"It's in Christ... we find out who we are and what we are living for." (Ephesians 1:11)

"The Purpose-Driven Life" has given me the truth and inspiration on the great Divine Plan for one's life and the proper attitude aligned with God's.

I realized that wherever God has placed me, there is always a reason. When the needs of the people entrusted in my care are met, I see the face of God.

Giving encouragement, a smile, an expression of support and, most of the time, by just being there to keep the family



together and happy, can positively change one's life.

Looking beyond my self-absorption and rising above—through God's grace—obstacles have prompted me to give unconditional love and selfless service not only to those dearest to me but also to others.

Thus, I can truly declare that this soul-piercing book, "The Purpose-Driven Life," has largely affected my personal, family and social life.

In celebration of the Philippine Daily Inquirer's 20th anniversary, get a chance to win P3,000 PowerBooks gift certificates and be featured in the Inquirer's pages by writing about the power of reading. For contest mechanics, log on to www.powerbooks.com.ph

Maestra Dalisay Aldaba...

From page D1

By coincidence, Romanian violinist Alexandru Tomescu will be in Manila Wednesday this week for a performance on March 26, at the PhilamLife Theater, with Mary Anne Espina.

The first thing this violinist does before he does his first rehearsal here is to go the Marikina cemetery to visit the grave of Romero.

I find this an irony because Romero is held in very high regard as an artist abroad but ignored in his own country.

But I suppose the best tribute any artist can get will not come from award-giving bodies but from the heart and mind of the audiences which get respite from national turmoil from the unforgettable performances of these artists.

In memory of Mr. Romero and Maestra Dalisay Aldaba, I will ask Alexandru Tomescu to play "Meditation" from the opera "Thais" as part of his Manila program.

Those who want to catch up with this concert may call 9007023 or text 0910-8851136. Mr. Tomescu will also be heard at the Pasig Museum on March 28 as part of the ongoing Pasig Summer Music Festival opened by tenor Otoniel Gonzaga, who ran out of encore numbers in that concert.

Dumaguete writing workshop now accepting applications

APPLICATIONS FOR FELLOWSHIPS TO THE 45th edition of the National Writers Workshop in Dumaguete City are being accepted until March 31.

National Artist for Literature Edith L. Tiempo, workshop director, announced that the summer sessions will be held May 8 to 27.

Application letters should be addressed to Dr. Tiempo, 2/F CAP Bldg., Rizal Blvd., Dumaguete City, together with a resume, two 1" x 2" photos of the applicant, and manuscripts in English in any of the following genres, with respective quantity:

3-5 short stories, 7-10 poems, 3-5 creative nonfiction essays, or 2 one-act plays.

The manuscripts can be sent as hardcopy, but should also be accompanied by a disk copy, preferably in MS Word, plus a certification that the works are original and a recommendation letter from a professor of literature or creative writing or a writer of distinction.

Fellowships cover board and lodging.

Writers who have already received fellowships in other national workshops for this year are enjoined to apply at another time.

Asean-Japan technical theater workshop

A FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND TRAINING in the field of technical theater runs March 13-27 at the Sing Arts Studio in Mandaluyong City as the Sing Arts Foundation, in cooperation with the Japan Foundation, holds the Asean-Japan Technical Theater and Design Workshop.

With the theme "Acting Together, Working Together," the workshop will gather technical theater professionals from

Asean-member countries, including the Philippines and Japan. Its aim is to advance the knowledge and skills of the participants and create a network for intellectual and artistic exchange related to technical theater.

Theater design experts from the Philippines and Japan will facilitate the workshop, headed by Japanese lighting designer Shoko Matsumoto; top Filipino designer Gino Gonzales;

theater manager expert Ed Murillo; arts administration expert and Cultural Center of the Philippines president Nestor O. Jardin; and Japanese sound designer Ishi Hiromi and technical director Hitoshi Yishiki.

A highlight of the workshop is the restaging of Tanghalang Pilipino's hit musical "Zsa Zsa Zazurah."

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Damitng choices. (Isang numero,

Seven thespians on one stage

By Joel Trinidad
Contributor

REPETOY PHILIPPINES' newest production, "7 ng Umaga," the nine-member cast of which I am a humble part, is a Philippine adaptation (in English) of Paul Osborn's highly acclaimed Broadway drama "Morning's at Seven."

This play is something of a Repertory Philippines homecoming for us, a "new beginning" for a lot of venerable theater veterans whose acting experience, taken together, clocks a staggering 200-plus years!

Here, in alphabetical order, are the nine returning Rep actors of "7 ng Umaga."

Tony Amador (first Rep show: "Miss Julie," 1967). Tito Tony has performed with several the-

ater groups here and abroad. He is the brother of Rep's late great co-founder Zeneida "Tita Bibot" Amador, who directed him in the first-ever Rep production. He took a break from Rep shortly after that, citing creative differences with the director in the form of her hitting him on the head a lot.

Baby Barredo (co-founder, Repertory Philippines). Who hasn't heard of Baby Barredo? A graduate of the prestigious Juilliard School in New York, Tita Baby has performed in and directed literally hundreds of plays in several countries. This, however, is her first time to direct a play and star in it at the same time. Thus, she is the only member of the cast the director has not yelled at.

Liesl Batucan (first Rep show: "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat," 1993).

Liesl was working in Syclp, Gorres and Velayo as a corporate finance consultant when she attended a Rep audition and was instantly hired. These days, this immensely talented artist spends most of her time acting, singing and assistant-directing.

Miguel Faustmann (first Rep show: "Hello, Dolly," 1974). An architect by profession, this Austrian-Spanish 1985 Aliw awardee is also a director, set designer, voice talent and commercial model. Interestingly, while many of us have struggled to use unaccented English for this adaptation, Miguel has had no trouble at all sounding completely and authentically Filipino.

Jay Valencia-Glorioso (first Rep show: "Les Misérables," 1993). Jay is one of the founders (with Karla Gutierrez, Nolyn Cabahug, and several others) of POC, or the Philippine Opera Company. But she is actually a dancer by training. Not only has she trained with Filipinescas, she was also a dance scholar under the highly respected Tita Radaic.

Enchong Kaimo (first Rep show: "Lysistrata," 1968). A former drama student of Tita Bibot and Tita Baby at St. Joseph's, Enchong was a Rep actor before there even was a Rep. Though En-



THE CAST of Repertory Philippines' "7 ng Umaga," an adaptation of Paul Osborn's "Morning's at Seven"

chang first joined Rep as a stage manager/usherette/ticket seller/sandwich maker; Tita Bibot and Tita Baby kept collaring her and forcing her to step in whenever some actor got sick or fired. The rest is history.

Joel Trinidad (first Rep show: "Kismet," 1989). Joel is an actor, a voice talent, a commercial model, an acting coach, an improv comedian, an English teacher, a lyricist, and a dazzling playwright who is funny, talented, handsome,

and also smart enough to have volunteered to write this article.

Joy Virata (first Rep show: "How the Other Half Loves," 1976). Tita Joy has appeared in countless plays and musicals, written the critically acclaimed musical "Miong," and developed the immensely successful Repertory Children's Theater, where she has been working with wicked witches, dwarfs, boys made of wood, and magic beanstalks.

Chiqui Xerez-Burgos (first

Rep show: "The Merchant of Venice," 1995). Famous mostly for having the most misspelled name in local theater, Chiqui Xerez-Burgos is a familiar face on stage and screen. He joined Rep 1995, apparently enjoying the experience so much that he waited a full 11 years to do it again.

"7 Ng Umaga" runs March 24-April 9 at Rep's Globe Theater at Onstage in Greenbelt 1. Call 8870710 or 8919999.

K A M A Y A N
HANDOG GRADUATION '06!



Handprint Fan, Libreng Pampapresko!



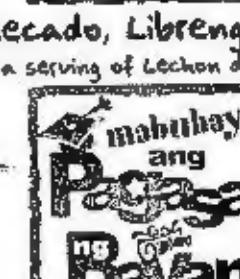
Welcome Drink, Libreng Pampalamig!



Stuffed Toy, Libreng Pampaatiw!

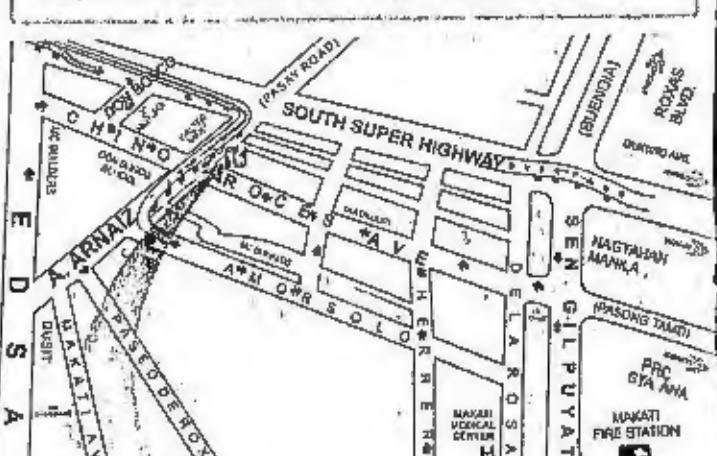


Sugpo Mantecado, Libreng Pampabusog!
(for a serving of Lechon de Leche)



Congratulations, Graduates 2006!

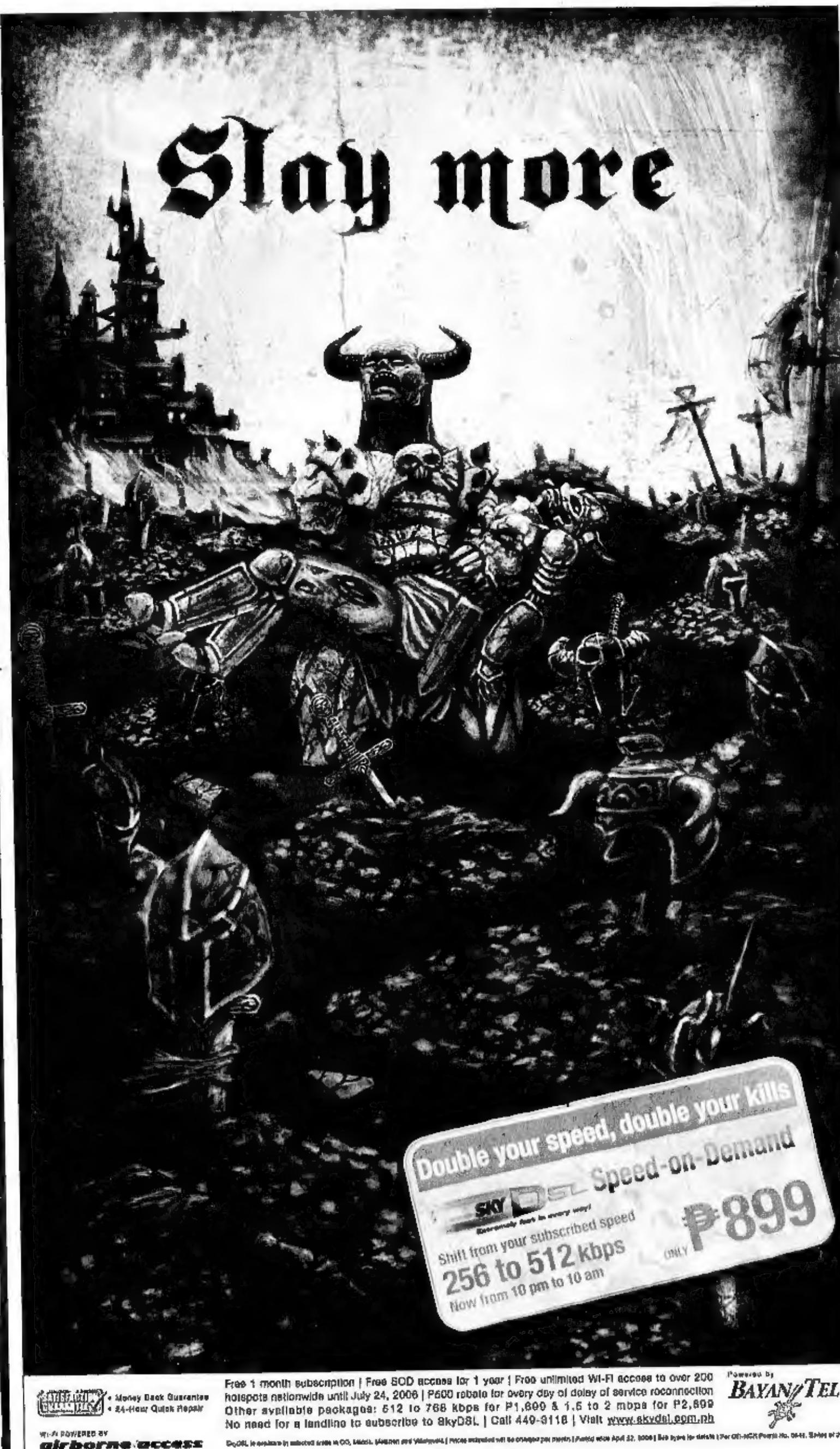
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